

FOOTBALL 1993 - INSIDE THE NFL

SPORT

NBA Draft Forecast

**Tarkanian Deals
With Defeat**

Cowboys Rule!

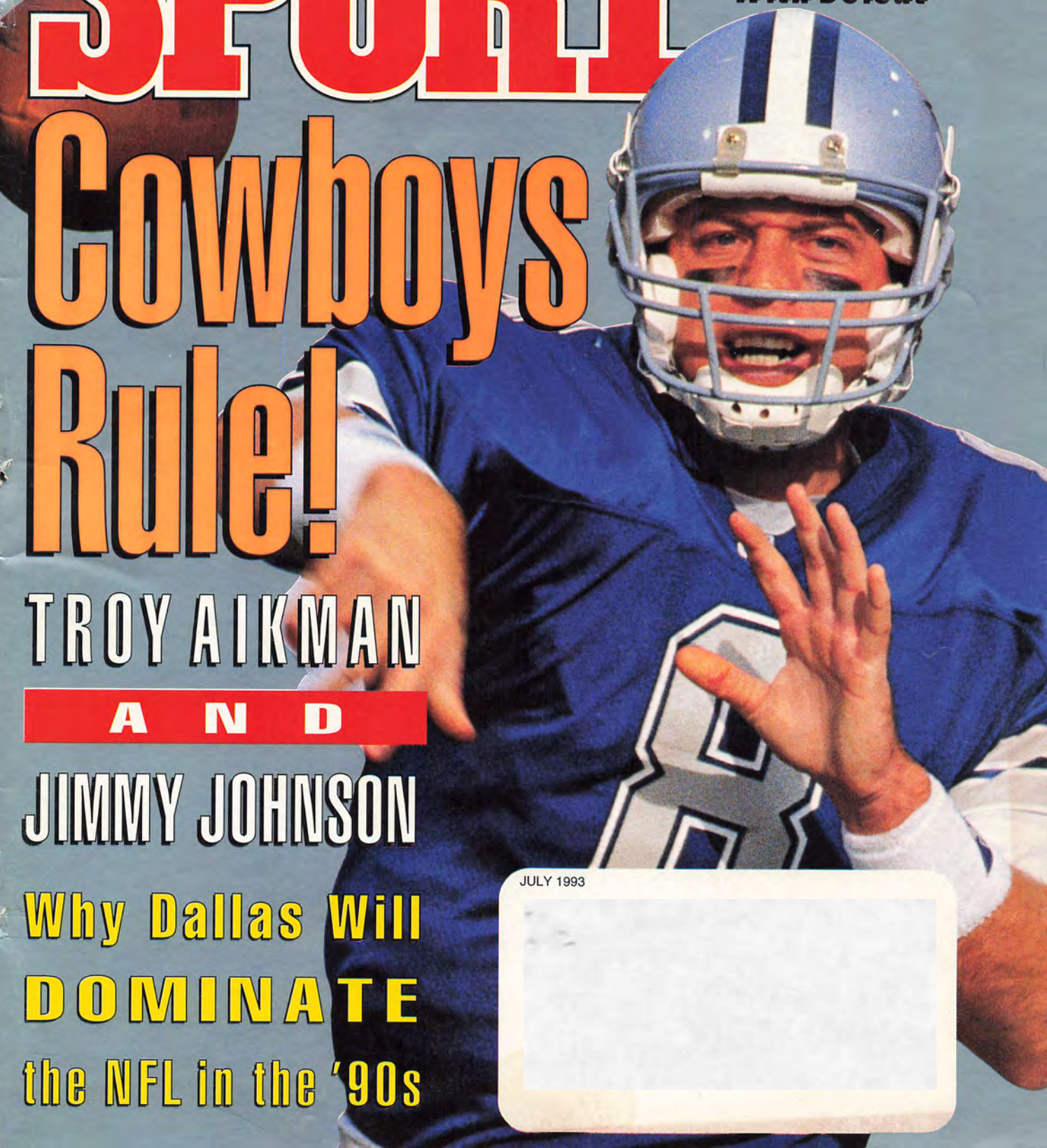
TROY AIKMAN

A N D

JIMMY JOHNSON

**Why Dallas Will
DOMINATE
the NFL in the '90s**

JULY 1993





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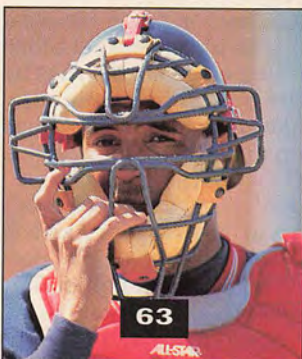


TOM DIPACE

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ROCKET ROGER

Thanks for the May issue article "Rocket Science," on Roger Clemens (pictured). He has always been my favorite on a team of misfits, misfires and miscues. You did a great job of laying the groundwork and giving us insight into the Clemens aura.

Timothy Howard
Washburne, Maine

Your May issue had a great article on Roger Clemens, but it was unexpected since you bashed the Red Sox in your previous issue. Boston will make you eat your stupid words.

Ben Towne
Brownfield, Maine

WE'LL TAKE NOLAN

I've just finished reading the article "Stealing Time" (May). Some people say that Rickey Henderson is overrated, but I say the all-time stolen-base champ and the best leadoff man in baseball is largely overcriticized. You said Henderson lacks class, but you said it because of his factual statement that he's the best base-stealer ever. He is, indeed, the greatest of all time; no arguments there. He is also criticized for being cocky. Well, hey, let's just shoot the guy. Wake up, people. Welcome to the '90s and get out of the past. Henderson just reflects the times. There aren't many out there as humble as Nolan Ryan, and you shouldn't single out Henderson.

Austin Pack
Clemmons, North Carolina

KNICKING THE BULLS

After reading your outstanding article on the Knicks-Bulls rivalry ("The Main Event," May), I feel compelled to offer a comment: Step aside, boys, it's the Knicks' year. We took



Chicago to seven games last year with John Starks as our only outside threat. How are you guys going to deal with us in the playoffs this time? We've acquired valuable veterans like Doc Rivers and Rolando Blackman that we badly needed. Our bench is deeper, our defense can't be overcome, and Patrick Ewing is on a mission to destroy any team or player in his path. He and all of New York can taste that championship title. If Michael Jordan and his band of softies can't handle *real* big-city basketball, step aside! Like the slogan says, "New York: tough town, tougher team." Thugs maybe, champions definitely.

Richie Pietrowski
Brooklyn, New York

MR. POPULARITY

Too bad for the guy who drew the short straw and had to interview Barry Bonds (April). There's nothing we fans like more than another superstar who's in love with himself. Here's a guy who claims to get a thrill from being called an ass by the media because they have to come back and kiss up to him after they realize their mistake. Somehow I don't believe the sportswriters of the world are standing in line to pucker up. So, Barry, take it from another Barry: Try a slice of humble pie once in a while, and don't forget to see the vet for your distemper shots.

Barry Burrud
Minneapolis, Minnesota

IF YOU SAY SO

As a new reader who comes to SPORT as the result of a gift subscription, I just want to tell you I think the magazine's great. The last two issues—April and May—have been fantastic. The baseball preview was excellent, and so was the NBA playoff preview. I read each issue cover-to-cover and enjoyed every bit of it. Keep up the good work, and keep the great issues coming.

Bill Himmelstein
Prairie Village, Kansas

Congratulations on a great magazine. I especially enjoy the Tale of the Tape and look forward to every issue.

Larry Yocum
Greenville, California

MORE FOR HANK

After seeing a few issues' worth of SPORT Mail, I'm encouraged to offer my agreement with the other people who were offended by the Hank Aaron interview (February). He was a great athlete and has a record to prove it, and that's the end of it. His comments and attitudes about race are of the type that get other people fired. His anecdote about not giving autographs to the white people at the restaurant speaks for itself; I think he's a racist. I also believe he should stand for more than trying to get blacks jobs they're not qualified for; I don't think whites or blacks deserve to get jobs unless they're qualified. After reading his interview, I get the impression that he has a tendency to say and do stupid things.

Ernie Fishman
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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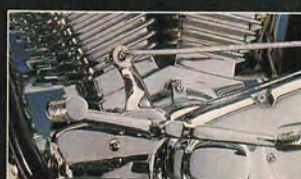
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HURRAH FOR FOOTBALL FREE AGENCY

THE NEW NFL SWAP MEET COMES TO TOWN

Damn those NFL players.

They used their new free agency to turn the league into a high-priced swap meet.

Runaway greed. Wholesale abandoning of team and civic loyalties. They tore out our heart and stomped that sucker flat. Buncha spoiled, heartless mercenaries.

And overpaid! Second-string quarterbacks now are making a million bucks to doodle on a clipboard. Journeyman linemen are making more money than the president of the United States.

It's un-American. What if Quarterback-in-Chief Bubba Clinton, when his current four-year, no-cut contract is up, jumps ship and signs on as president of Peru because it offers him a better deal?

The foregoing is a sampling of public opinion as we prepare for the '93 NFL season. I would tend to agree with that thinking, were it not for two factors:

1. Despite the ample opportunities I've afforded it, my brain has not yet turned into jalapeno bean dip.

2. I sometimes get close enough to the action to hear the bones and ligaments snap, crackle and pop.

When we sportswriters cover football games, some of us leave the press box with about five minutes left in the game and saunter down to the sidelines. We do this so we can get to the locker room right after the game and start collecting clichés and personal insults to supplement our own keen observations.

The sideline is a lousy vantage point from which to tell what the heck is happening on the field. From ground level, football looks as organized and strategic as a shipwreck. But for me it is the most enlightening five minutes of the day, because football is like sex: To fully appreciate it, you have to get fairly close to it, although the closer you get, the more confusing it becomes.

Big, strong, angry men try to hurt one another, and frequently succeed. (That's in football, not sex—although I haven't read Madonna's book.) Up close, NFL football is a lot more painful and violent than it is from the stands, or on TV, even with John Madden's in-



SCOTT OSTLER

credibly realistic sound effects.

It's a dirty, dangerous job (playing football, not making sound effects), and whatever gains in salary, security and benefits the players have made at the expense of the owners is fine with me. The team owners all make more money than the players, and I have yet to see an owner carried off the field with a shredded anterior cruciate ligament. Not that I would wish that on any of them, although if the Saints' owner ever pulls a hamstring while doing his Benson Boogie, I probably won't even send a card.

Of all team-sport athletes, football players have always gotten the biggest hosing. They do more, at greater risk, for less. Baseball players average more than \$1 million a year and take days off if they get tired. Do you think Lawrence Taylor ever gets tired? When he reads about a baseball player sitting out a game in order to get his mental focus back, Lawrence must spit out his protein shake. So when fans complain about the obscenely rich, spoiled players in baseball and basketball, I don't put up much of a fight. I write it off as the Harry Caray Salary Fixation.

I sat in a baseball broadcast booth with Caray one game a few years back and every comment seemed financially motivated, i.e.: "HOW can a man mak-

ing \$500,000 swing at a *PITCH* like THAT?" Harry sees himself as championing the cause of the common fan, but to me he's cheapening the game and championing the cause of the over-championed owners.

Plus, *HOW* can a man who makes all the money Harry makes sing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" in a voice that makes Roseanne Arnold sound like Whitney Houston?

Anyway, when the topic of overpaid athletes shifts to football, I object. I happen to be thrilled for the football players now that they're starting to get a little more buck for their bang-up. We're entering a new financial era in the NFL with limited free agency, and if the players weren't taking advantage of the situation, we would need to check the padding inside those helmets.

When Reggie White was shopping himself around (see, even I lapse into terminology that makes players sound like street-walkers), the 49ers offered him a contract that he would have snapped up in a minute, except that it was guaranteed for only one season, not the three-year guarantee he got from the Packers.

"If we give White a guaranteed contract," a 49ers official explained, "all the players will want one."

Nonsense. Why would any player want a guaranteed three-year contract when he could get a one-year contract and run the exhilarating risk of blowing out his back, knee or other vital component and watch several millions of his dollars jump back into the owner's pocket?

Speaking of owners, here's a tiny lesson in economics. As player salaries go up, ticket prices go up, but there is no connection. Owners raise prices for the same reason giraffes eat the choicest leaves—because they can.

When owners—rich people getting richer even if their teams are lousy—raise the price of tickets, hot dogs and parking, they blame it on the players. A lot of fans and a lot of Harry Carays buy it, because after all, those greedy players are getting paid a lot of dough to play a kid's game, aren't they?

From the stands, maybe.

Up close, they're not kids and it's not a game.★

2
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CLASSIC INJUSTICE...BASEBALL'S ALL-STAR GAME IS NEAR, MEANING SOMEONE'S ABOUT TO GET THE SHAFT **BY RICK WEINBERG**



Rick Weinberg

Baseball's All-Star ballots are being tabulated, which means it's just a matter of time before a deserving player is either omitted from the prestigious starting lineup or left off the team altogether. "Happens every year, someone getting shafted for one reason or another, and it's just not fair," says Padres right fielder **Tony Gwynn**, an eight-time All-Star who's certain to roam the outfield in this year's midsummer classic at Baltimore's Camden Yards.

All-Star game injustices receive as much attention as All-Star game tape-measure homers and four-run first-inning shellings, something Braves pitcher **Tom Glavine** knows a little about.

"Something has to be done about the system; it can't go on like this," says Mariners third baseman **Edgar Martinez**, last year's eventual major-league batting leader, who was snubbed by the clueless fans who voted **Wade Boggs** into the starting lineup.

To speak with baseball's commissionerless headquarters in New York, it becomes clear nothing will be done soon enough. "One of the biggest problems is the pressure placed on the manager," says Tigers skipper **Sparky Anderson**, who's managed in five All-Star games. "I've agonized over [picking] pitchers and reserves."

The system needs to be changed. **Bobby Cox** and **Cito Gaston**, the managers agonizing this time around, should head three-manager selection committees for their respective leagues. Here's why:

Say one of the

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Michael Irvin

NL pitching selections comes down to **John Smoltz**, one of Cox's aces, and **Jose Guzman** of the Cubs. Say Smoltz has a \$50,000 bonus in his contract for making the All-Star team. Does Cox snub Guzman and go with Smoltz, which will cost Braves management \$50,000? Or does he risk angering Smoltz while saving the organization the 50 grand?

"It's a terrible position to be in," says Dodgers manager **Tom Lasorda**, who's managed in four All-Star games.

"I've had players [on other teams] upset with me because another guy's been picked over them. It's a situation where you're always going to get someone angry."

Until the system changes.



Tom Glavine

Look for several NFL teams this season to unveil an aggressive first-down passing attack that includes 12- to 15-yard hook, slant and curl patterns.

Why?

Because that's what the Cowboys did so often and so successfully in their dizzying romp to the NFL championship.

"The Cowboys established a new philosophy for the new season," says Broncos head coach **Wade Phillips**.

Many teams already pass often on first down because "defenses are looking for the run," says 49ers offensive coordinator **Mike Shanahan**, whose **Steve Young**-led offense is perhaps the most explosive and unpredictable in the league. But the Cowboys took first-down passing a step further in the Super Bowl, when quarterback **Troy Aikman** threw four touchdown passes—two to **Michael Irvin**—all on first-down plays.

Even the Cowboys' biggest play in the NFC championship game—the gutsy 70-yard hook-up from Aikman to

Alvin Harper in the fourth quarter—came on a 12-yard slant on first down. With Dallas at its own 20 and leading 24-20, San Francisco expected a conservative first-down play—**Emmitt Smith** off-tackle. So the 49ers went into an eight-man front, leaving the secondary in man-to-man coverage. Then, boom—Aikman hit Harper, and the Cowboys were off to Pasadena.

"The key [to outsmarting defenses] is balance," Aikman says, "because it enables you to pass on running downs and run on passing downs. What better way to keep a defense guessing?"

There is none, which is the beauty of the Cowboys' philosophy under the innovative and aggressive **Jimmy Johnson**. "Jimmy tries to avoid third-down passes—especially third-and-long—because the percentages are against you," Aikman says. Johnson prefers throwing early in a possession "to keep the heat off me and to loosen up the defense," Aikman says.

Of course, to institute an aggressive first-down passing attack, you need the personnel to execute, "and not many teams have it," says Aikman. "We've got the talent and we've got the confidence to go with it. If a team throws incomplete on first down, they're suddenly panicking because it's an obvious passing situation. We're not like that because we've been so successful and we've got so many weapons."



Steve Young

One of the teams that will pass more aggressively is Denver, thanks largely to a reloaded running game, with acquisitions **Rod Bernstein** and **Robert Delpino**.

"We're gonna have a wide-open offense," Wade Phillips says (which prompted **John Elway** to crack, "I just hope it's

wide open in the end zone"). Broncos owner **Pat Bowlen** had stomach cramps over the way Elway was confined in the last few years. But Phillips vows: "We're going to be more pass-oriented than ever. We're gonna have John taking more five-step drops,



Michael Irvin

and we're gonna have him releasing the ball a lot quicker.

"Our problem is that John's been sacked 40 to 50 times in each of the last three seasons, so in order for us to open it up, we needed to protect him better, and we feel we got the players to do it [by signing free-agent linemen **Brian Habib** and **Don Maggs**]. John's never really been up among the top quarterbacks in touchdown passes. We feel he's every bit as good as **Dan Marino**, **Steve Young**, **Jim Kelly**, yet he's not been able to equal them statistically." Says Elway, "I can't remember the last time I was so excited to start a season."

Oilers defensive end **Sean Jones** says: "One of the things [head coach] **Jack Pardee** stresses is that there's competition at every position. Now it's really true with **Buddy Ryan** around." ...Says Suns point guard **Kevin Johnson**: "Everyone's raving over **Shaquille [O'Neal]**, but the [rookie] that's knocked my shoes off is **Jimmy Jackson**. He's absolutely going to be a dominant star in this league for years. The characteristic that sticks out to me is his ability to make teammates better, and how many of those guys are in our league? With Magic and Larry gone, not many. Jimmy's what, 6-4? He plays like he's 6-8. He's got a great medium-range J, posts up, he's aggressive on the glass, he's a passer. I love the guy."

Cardinals first baseman **Gregg Jefferies** on his elation to return to the National League: "It's more hostile, more down-and-dirty, spikes-in-the-air here. All they do over there [the AL] is wait for the three-run homer. I'm the NL type." Says Cards coach **Chris Chambliss**, "The one thing we lacked was a guy with a fierce intensity, a fiery attitude, and Gregg's brought us that." ...When the Vikings signed free agent **Jim McMahon** over **Steve Beuerlein** and **Jeff Hostetler** and failed to swing a trade for **Joe Montana**, "There was a lot of celebratin' going on [in the NFC Central]," says an assistant coach from that division. "We were certain Minnesota was gonna get Montana or Beuerlein, which would've made Minnesota the division favorite, hands down. When they got McMahon, we went, 'Huh?' Sure, McMahon's a tough son of a gun, but I don't see how they could've rated him over the others."★

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CHEMICAL-FREE CHEERS?

THE NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS FINALLY BECOME FIRST IN SOMETHING

COMPUTERS

SPORTS INFO PLUS

The latest entry in the sports-info field is called Axcis, a hand-sized Hewlett Packard computer tailored for the serious fan, who, for instance, may compete in fantasy-league sports. First introduced in April with horse-racing software cartridges, Axcis will make available baseball, football and basketball programs beginning in July. A modem and an 800-number link the user to customized sports data that update player and team stats on a continual basis, and the terminal lets you crunch the names and numbers in useful ways.

"The information is available all over," says Malcolm Kaufman, chairman of Axcis, "but even assuming you have the equipment, it takes time to search through the standard database. We pre-pack it all. You just plug in, push one button and everything happens automatically." In other words, it's easy to use.

The cost for the unit and one program is \$299, and \$25 a month lets you make unlimited calls to the database.

—Tom Singer



BRIAN SHULLOCK

Things may look bleak for the New England Patriots—things always look bleak for the Pats, don't they?—but the organization still has something to cheer about: drug-free cheerleaders, the first such self-proclaimed squad in the NFL, which is only too happy to tell the world what a good group of girls it is.

"Whether people like it or not," says squad leader Lisa Coles, "professional cheerleaders are looked up to by little girls. It's sad that people who kids look up to disappoint them, and I wanted my girls to think about it." Hence, drug tests—*naturally*.

But this crusade against performance- and mood-altering substances seems to miss the target. Isn't silicone

the unnatural chemical of choice for the aspiring models and dancers who become cheerleaders? Just how do the Patriots feel about breast enhancement? Are those women *really* chemical free?

"We don't ask about that; it's nobody's business," says Coles, adding that she'd be surprised if any members on the squad had after-market boobs. "This is a different type of squad; we're not the Raiderettes and we're not a T&A show. It's been an uphill battle trying to change the existing stereotypes. We want to market cheerleaders in a positive way."

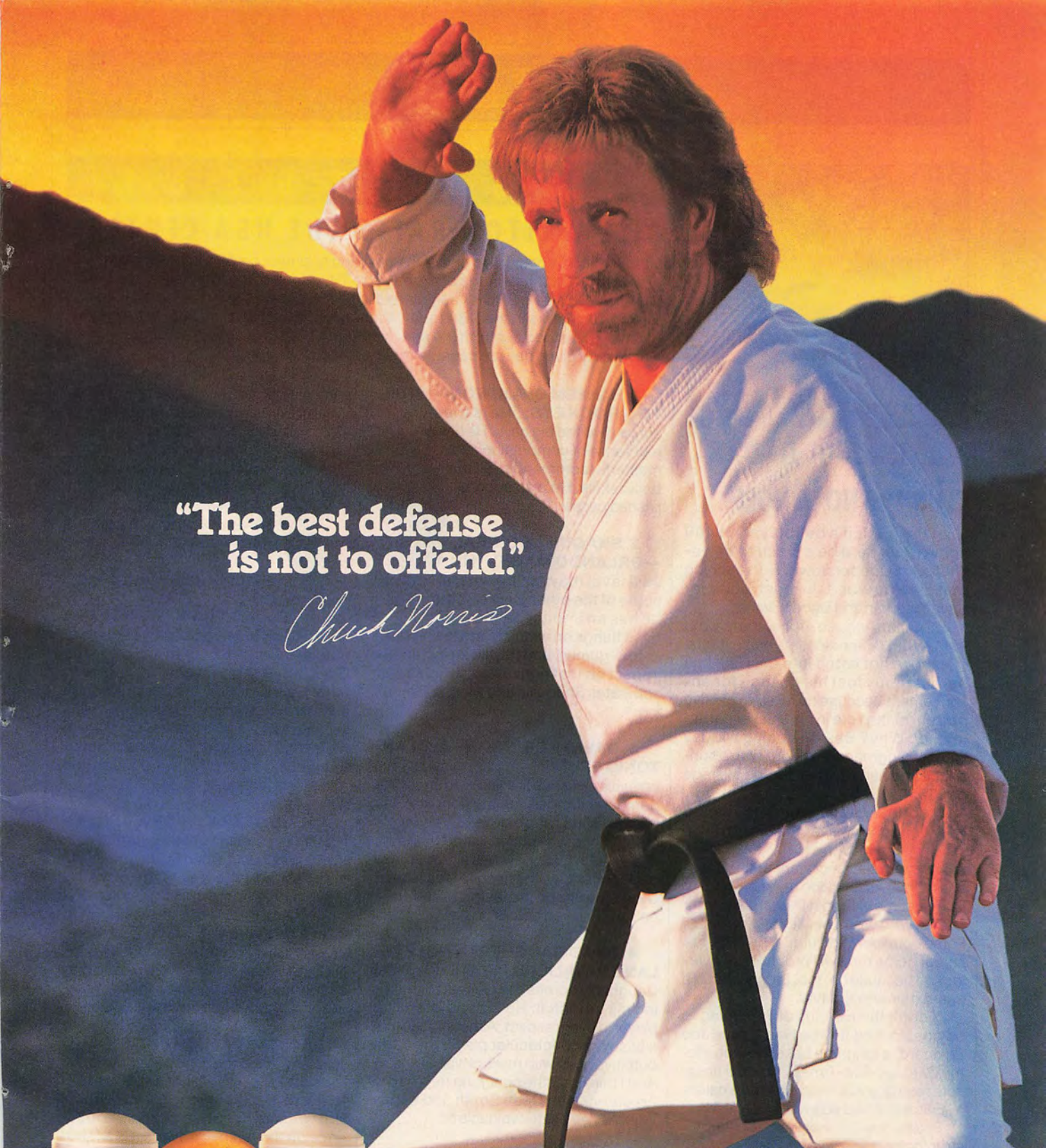
All things considered, we still like the Raiderettes.

—Terry Mulgannon



JIM HANSEN / WAKEMAN&FORREST

EDITED BY WILLIAM LADSON & TERRY MULGANNON

A full-page background image of Chuck Norris in a white martial arts gi with a black belt, striking a powerful pose with one arm raised. The background is a dramatic sunset or sunrise over mountains.

**"The best defense
is not to offend."**

Chuck Norris



NEW!

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In bold new Wide Sticks. Your move.

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SPORT TALK



SPORT ARCHIVE

RECORDS

CLUB 400 NO LONGER

In the past, if a ballplayer hit 400 home runs, he'd be a cinch to be enshrined in Cooperstown. But reaching that plateau won't do much good for Dave Kingman and Darrell Evans.

Kingman, whose 442 homers from 1971 to 1986 represent the highest total of anyone not voted into the Hall, has permanently lost his chance for enshrinement because he failed to get five percent of the vote in his first year of eligibility. Why? Besides being a lousy fielder, Kingman struck out with abundance and had a career batting average of .236.

"I doubt anything Kingman would have done could have changed things in getting him into the Hall," says Jack Lang, executive secretary of the Baseball Writers Association of America.

The same will most likely hold true for Evans, who won't be eligible for Hall of Fame consideration until 1995. His 414 career home runs will probably be overlooked because he, too, is considered a one-dimensional player.

"I don't think Evans did anything to be considered for the Hall," says Joe Goddard, a longtime baseball writer for the *Chicago Sun-Times*. "I would never vote for a guy who was one-dimensional. Evans just had power."

Evans, now a minor-league hitting instructor for the Colorado Rockies, wonders if Cooperstown is becoming too exclusive as time goes on.

"Maybe we're getting a little afraid to put more people in," he says. "The thing I balk at the most is the worry that we can't put in more than three people at a time. When the Hall gets up to 200 people, they're saying we can't keep putting people in. It's the most exclusive club you can be in."

—George Castle

BASKETBALL

BILL WALTON RATES THE NBA CENTERS

Bill Walton, considered one of the best and brightest centers in basketball history, has taken his knowledge of the game to TV, as one of the "Insiders" on the NBC Game of the Week. SPORT asked the big redhead, never short on opinion, to rate the top 10 centers in the NBA today. Walton felt, however, that there were only six big men that stood out from the rest, although he did give us four additional names who on any given day are capable of playing with the best.

1. HAKEEM OLAJUWON—HOUSTON ROCKETS: "He's the best player of all the big guys. He has a real sense of competition and a masterful command of all the basic skills. He's an accomplished passer."

2. SHAQUILLE O'NEAL—ORLANDO MAGIC: "His skill level may not be where some of the other guys are, but he has an impact on the game. I base things on winning and losing basketball games, and he has an incredible impact on that right away. That's what separates Shaquille and Alonzo Mourning."

3. DAVID ROBINSON—SAN ANTONIO SPURS: "I'm impressed by his versatility. He has the ability to shoot the perimeter jumper, run the floor and has tremendous range defensively. He's come a long way under a short time with coach John Lucas. He has a great sense of responsibility, the need to be a leader. David Robinson is playing better than he's ever played before."

4. BRAD DAUGHERTY—CLEVELAND CAVALIERS: "Of all the centers, Daugherty comes the closest to reaching his potential. He's an outstanding player in every aspect. Although he's not a flashy or spectacular player, he often outplays guys with more physical ability. And I think that the coaching he's had in his career with Dean Smith and Lenny Wilkens has been invaluable."

5. PATRICK EWING—NEW YORK KNICKS: "He can easily be considered the very best because of what he's done to lead the Knicks to the top of the Eastern Conference. This is one of the game's all-time great competitors. He loves to get out there and mix it up."

6. ALONZO MOURNING—CHARLOTTE HORNETS: "He's so young, so

enthusiastic, and such a fierce competitor. With his sense of the game of basketball, I believe he has a chance to move up. I love the way Alonzo shoots every time he gets the ball. That's just wild as can be. I like players who play with a reckless abandon."

—Honorable Mention—

ROBERT PARISH—BOSTON CELTICS: "Robert is still very capable of outplaying any or all of these guys. The Chief is one of my favorite players of all time. He's probably the best midrange shooter in the history of basketball. He's still able to have good games because of his mental approach. Basketball is mental competition, and he's as good as [the above-mentioned centers] in that."

CHRIS DUDLEY—NEW JERSEY NETS: "He doesn't get the numbers nor the attention, but when Dudley plays big minutes, and the rest of the guys are playing their game, he outplays everybody. Dudley is more of a role player than a guy who you build everything around. But his sense of timing, his positioning, his willingness and ability to play a role, make New Jersey a threat. Without him, they are just another team."

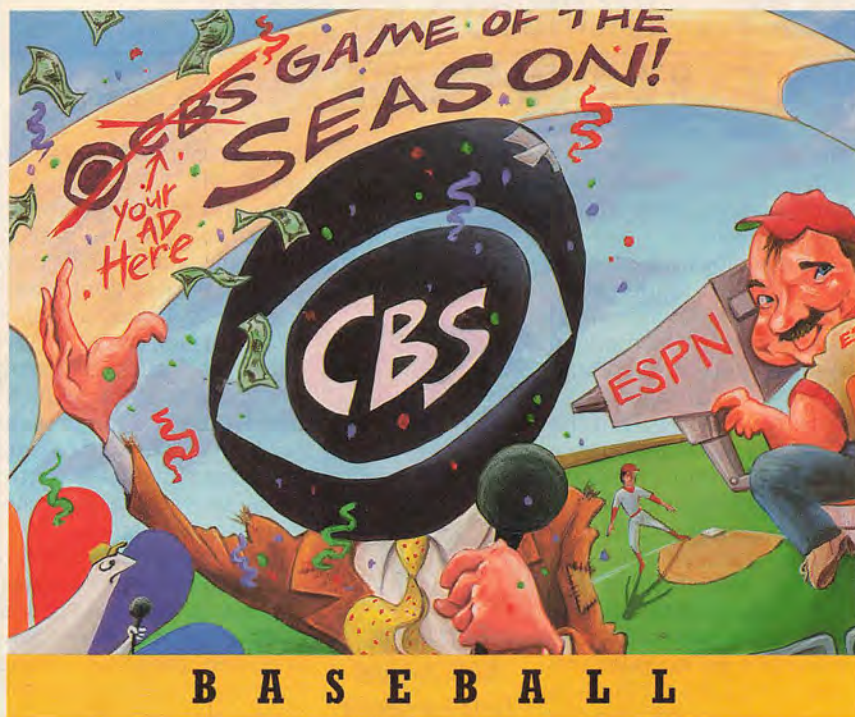
BILL CARTWRIGHT—CHICAGO BULLS: "He's sort of a combination of Parish and Dudley, in that he plays a role, [but is] not expected to do that much. But what he does has incredible influence on the team. Cartwright is a fabulous clutch player."

RONY SEIKALY—MIAMI HEAT: "I like his enthusiasm. I like his ability on the second jump. He's determined and persistent—not blessed with great physical ability yet very agile. Needs better coaching and needs more help from his teammates. They need to learn how to play with him."

—William Ladson



NBC SPORTS



A REAL TV DISASTER

Remember the good ol' days when the Baseball Game of the Week meant something? When you cut short your Saturday cartoon-viewing to see Joe Garagiola, Tony Kubek and your favorite players on a sunny afternoon on NBC? Remember "Baseball Fever—Catch It?" Remember the Brylcreem commercials ("A little dab 'Il do ya")?

Well, those days are gone. They disappeared when CBS signed a monster four-year, \$1.06 billion deal with Major League Baseball in 1989. Since that time, CBS has managed to:

- Alienate the network's baseball-viewing public by broadcasting so few regular-season games that fans were led to believe they were watching the CBS Game of the Month.

- Allow a cable network, ESPN, to become known as the *real* baseball station, with its propensity for covering games all over the nation throughout the week on a consistent basis.

- See its credibility drop so far that Major League Baseball is now contemplating splitting up its network coverage of the game to allow two networks to own television rights in the 1994 baseball season, for both financial and aesthetic reasons.

It looks as if CBS could end up losing half of its \$1 billion baseball invest-

ment; the network hasn't gotten the advertising sales it expected nor the ratings. When the powers-that-be step up to the negotiating table at the end of the year, don't expect the bidding to even approach the \$1 billion mark. A more likely figure is \$300 million.

Which is why Major League Baseball may split up its network coverage. Baseball will be lucky to get \$200 million each from two networks for four years, less than half of what was earned from the CBS deal.

And if networks get exclusive rights, ESPN might not be able to cut a cable deal. ESPN bid \$100 million to get its television rights, and the cable network has done a bang-up job by all accounts. But ESPN drew in only \$38 million in ads, a figure that doesn't add up in the big business of baseball. Look for ESPN, if it stays with the sport, to cut back to three or four games a week and not bid nearly as high next time around.

Yes, televised baseball does have a future, but the owners and players will have a lot less money to throw around, and that hints at a whole new Pandora's Box of problems. Can you say "bankruptcies?" How about "lockout?" Try "strike." Anyway, you get the idea.

—Darryl Howerton

BOOK REVIEW

MANUTE'S WORLD

Manute: The Center of Two Worlds, by Leigh Montville (Simon & Schuster, \$20.00, 218 pages).

You may be wondering why anyone would write a book on Manute Bol. Based on his NBA stats, he's not worth a page. In eight seasons, Bol has averaged a paltry 2.7 points and five rebounds per game. And this is a guy who—at 7 feet 7 inches—is the tallest man in NBA history.

But fortunately for Montville, the Dinka tribesman has led a fascinating life that will grip the reader. Like many of the natives from Sudan, Africa, the 30-year-old Bol was taught to raise cattle, not shoot a ball through a hoop. In fact, he had never heard of basketball until 1979, when a relative convinced him to play on a police team in his area.

According to Montville, Bol's lack of basketball skills was ignored by college and NBA teams, which instead drooled over his enormous height. The Los Angeles Clippers, for instance, were willing to draft his rights without even having seen him play.

Although Bol has gone on to play for three NBA teams—Washington, Golden State and Philadelphia—none tried to improve his basketball skills, settling instead for a shot-blocker who can do little else. —William Ladson



MOTORSPORTS

ROBOT RACERS...RACING PUTS THE BRAKES ON TECHNOLOGY BY RICK VOEGELIN

Auto racing has carried on a flagrant affair with technology since the earliest days of internal combustion. Now the party finally may be over.

No sport is as dependent on equipment as auto racing. Aluminum bats and graphite rackets have certainly improved athletes' performances on baseball diamonds and tennis courts. But no bat can yet compute the flight of a split-finger fastball—and then instantly adjust the batter's swing for a home run impact.

At the highest levels of auto racing, however, unrestrained technology has the potential to relegate drivers to the role of mannequins who model their sponsors' logos on the victory podium. Too much tire-spin? Outfit the race car with traction control. Not enough stopping power? Install anti-lock brakes.

Driver over-revs the engine? Design a fully automatic transmission that shifts gears on time, every time—without human intervention.

Technology is both a race-car driver's ally and antagonist in the search for speed. A technical breakthrough can give a team an edge on its competition—an "unfair advantage," in the words of the late Mark Donohue, a championship-winning driver who viewed racing with an engineer's analytical perspective. And, yet, the dark side of technology is that sophisticated systems could eventually make a driver's skills irrelevant, reducing auto racing to a life-size arcade game in

which the cars are driven by remote control from the pits.

Technology has whipsawed the upper echelons of auto racing. For techno-junkies, it is the best of times: computer-controlled suspensions, gaso-

line blends that are as potent as rocket fuel, and racing engines that turn 14,000 rpm without valve springs. But for team owners, sponsors and race promoters, it is hard times indeed: out-of-control costs, small fields, and races that resemble parades.

The series that bet on high-tech's box-office appeal are hurting. The world sports-car championship is missing in action, the international Formula One championship is limping, and IMSA's GTP



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MOTORSPORTS

series (America's premier sports-car series) is hanging on by a thread. In contrast, the racing series that emphasize the show over technical sophistication are prospering. The success of the NASCAR stock-car series is the envy of race promoters worldwide.

NASCAR's formula is no secret. The race cars may be as basic as farm tractors, but they're reasonably affordable, rock-solid reliable, and virtually indestructible. The show's the thing in stock-car racing, and the drivers are superstars.

The appeal of this retro-tech approach hasn't been overlooked by rival sanctioning bodies. IndyCar racing has imposed sweeping limits on exotic engine and chassis developments. Even Formula One's ruling princes have

seen the light: In 1994, automatic devices will be banned from the world driving championship. "It's not Nintendo," declares Max Mosley, president of FISA, auto racing's international governing body.

The paradox of racing in the '90s is

that the automobiles in the spectator parking lots may be more technically advanced than the cars on the race track. After all, even mom-and-pop commuter cars are now equipped with electronic engine controls, anti-lock brakes, traction control, speed-sensitive steering, and computer-controlled suspensions. But auto racing's policy-makers are evidently willing to sacrifice the sport's standing as an engineering showcase for its long-term survival.

If money is the mother's milk of politics, it is also the lifeblood of auto racing. The pioneers of hot rodding distilled racing to its essence with a simple axiom: Speed costs money. With money now in short supply, auto racing is putting the brakes on runaway technology. ★



ONE ON ONE

BIP ROBERTS

"MAYBE I'M QUICKER BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE
SIX FEET WORTH OF BODY TO DRESS."

Bip Roberts is as quick as his first name, so it's natural for him to dress in a flash. While his teammates graze at the salad bowl and shoot the bull after a spring workout, Roberts pulls on a pair of jeans, a Buckwheat T-shirt and a Dallas Cowboys cap in the time it might take him to slide a toe through the dirt, gauge a pitcher's move and swipe second.

"Maybe I'm quicker because I don't have six feet worth of body to dress," says Roberts, who stands 5-7, 165 pounds.

Size—or the relative absence of it—hasn't been much of a handicap to Roberts in his major-league career. He has a knack for coming on stage as a supporting actor and stealing the spotlight from the stars. In 1990, Roberts beat out Tony Gwynn and Roberto Alomar for the San Diego Padres' Most Valuable Player Award. Last year, Roberts snatched the Cincinnati Reds' MVP Award from Barry Larkin, who practically reinvented the shortstop position.

It helped that Roberts made headlines in September when he tied a league record with 10 consecutive hits. But the definitive moment came a month earlier, when the trainers peeled him off the center-field wall in Atlanta. It seems Bip was a bit overzealous in chasing down a fly ball on the track. Still, Roberts started all but five games and finished the season with a .323 batting average, 92 runs scored and 44 steals, while playing four



positions.

When Roberts hung a \$3.9 million defeat on the Reds in arbitration after the season, general manager Jim Bowden called the decision "tragic." The old Bip might have lashed out in anger. The new Bip, a more contemplative sort, assessed Bowden's comments and stuffed the hard feelings in the bat rack. He hasn't got time for the pain.

"I came out of my hearing feeling like the Reds appreciated everything I did," Roberts says. "They never attacked me personally. I decided before I went, 'I'm not going to harbor any bad feelings whether I win or lose.'"

If Roberts has shed the malcontent label that followed him from San Diego to Cincinnati in 1991, hard knocks have a way of

smoothing the rough edges off a person. Sitting on an aluminum bench at the Reds' Plant City complex, Roberts turns serious, reflecting upon the trauma in his own life. He has endured a world of upheaval in recent years while helping his father recover from a crack addiction.

Leon Roberts, 50, is a cosmetologist by trade, and as Bip recalls, there was plenty of money to be made in the perm-and-curl business. But Leon eventually fell in with the wrong crowd, and the warning signs were evident when Bip was in the minors.

"My father worked all day and never had any money," Roberts says. "That was the telltale sign. I confronted the problem because I got tired of the calls for \$100 every week. I'd say, 'Wait a minute, I'm supporting your habit, right?' He'd say he was OK. But I knew."

In 1990, Roberts admitted his father to the Delancey Street Foundation, a San Francisco re-educational center for convicts, prostitutes and drug offenders. For Leon Roberts, drug rehab is a 24-hour-a-day proposition. He suffered a relapse last year and is now involved with the Delancey Street program in Los Angeles. Bip provides moral support and pays some of his father's medical bills.

Surprisingly, Bip received some flak when he first went public with his father's ordeal. He stands by his decision.

"A lot of people said, 'Why did he say this about his dad? You don't talk about personal

BY JERRY CRASNICK

ONE ON ONE

things in the paper," Roberts says. "But these are the same people who have the same problem now. They're afraid to tackle it head on."

The obvious question: How did Bip Roberts avoid the same pitfalls? The obvious answer is athletics. When Roberts was growing up on

"If I was sitting in the same room with Marge right now, I'd say, 'Do you really understand how these [racial slurs] affect people?' If she honestly said she didn't, I'd have to teach her a few things."

Malcolm Hill in East Oakland, lunch breaks were a necessary evil. His world revolved around sports, and he'd play ball at Hillman Park from morning to night—sometimes beyond.

He received the requisite guidance from his mother, grandmother and uncles to stay clear of gangs and drugs. He learned to fight, but only when bullies tried to take advantage of him.

While Roberts' survival skills helped him find a world beyond Oakland, he wasn't prepared for the politics of professional ball. In 1986, he hit .253 as a rookie for the Padres. Management responded by sending him back to Triple-A Las Vegas for two years. In 1987, Roberts was fined by manager Jack Krol for failing to run out a pop fly. He might have quit and gone home if Rob Picciolo, then a minor-league coach, hadn't stopped him on the runway

and urged him to stick with it.

By 1990, the fans in San Diego wanted to reach out and hug Roberts. It seems odd, then, that Roberts should refer to his tenure in San Diego as "bittersweet." Before the Padres traded him and a minor-leaguer to Cincinnati for pitcher Randy Myers in December 1991, Roberts was at odds with manager Greg Riddoch and was tagged with the label of a troublemaker.

Roberts is convinced that pitcher Bruce Hurst tried to undermine him with San Diego management. The hard feelings between Hurst and Roberts erupted on the field on Opening Day 1992 in Cincinnati.

"He's not really a topic of conversation, or one of my favorite people," Roberts says, "so he doesn't come up on a daily basis. But when I see him, it brings back memories. Bad memories."

Like the time in 1991 when Roberts went on the disabled list with a knee injury. "All the players who were close to me and respected me came up and said, 'Good luck, man,' and shook my hand," Roberts says. "But Bruce Hurst never said good luck or shook my hand. He never said a word to me. He showed me a lot that day."

As Roberts reflects on San Diego, another incident comes to mind.

"I listen to rap music," he says. "Sometimes I come into the clubhouse and I'm singing a rap song. Tony Gwynn told me, 'Every time you do that, some of these guys cringe.' The funny thing is, me and Shawn Abner sang the same songs. I don't know if it was a racial thing or a personal thing. Probably some of both."

Roberts has been a happier camper in Cincinnati. He clashed briefly with former manager Lou Piniella last August, but they patched things up in no time. Roberts incurred so many nagging injuries—and spent so much

time shaking them off on the playing field—his teammates jokingly presented him with a BIP award, also known as the Body In Pain award. He was touched by the sentiment.

Of course, Cincinnati hasn't been all sweetness and harmony. For four months last winter, the town was shaken by revelations that Reds owner Marge Schott referred to former outfielders Dave Parker and Eric Davis as her "million-dollar niggers."

Roberts and Larkin, as the most prominent African-Americans on the team, were thrust into the role of spokesmen. As much as Schott's remarks stung Roberts, he was careful with his public comments for fear of the hate mail they might elicit.

"If I was sitting in the same room with Marge right now, I'd say, 'Do you really understand how these words affect people?'" Roberts says. "If she honestly said she didn't, I'd have to teach her a few things."

Roberts, eligible for free agency after this season, would consider settling in Cincinnati for the long haul. The fans have embraced him,

just as they did in San Diego. And how many athletes enjoy the prominence of being recognized by their first name? Roberts isn't in the same league as Reggie or Magic, but he's received considerable acclaim as Bip.

Roberts, whose given name is Leon Joseph III, received the nickname as a child. The Batman television series was in vogue, and when young Leon would hog the channel changer, family members would "bip" him in the back of the head in much the same way the Caped Crusader would "bop" the Joker or Riddler.

He's been Bip ever since. "Barry Larkin jokes around and calls me Leon sometimes," Roberts says. "My mother used to call me Leon Joseph sometimes, but now she calls me Bip. I've met other people who said their nickname was Bip. There was this police officer in San Diego who used to come to games and say, 'My name is Bip too.' I'd tell him, 'I'm the real Bip.'"★

Jerry Crasnick is a national baseball writer for the *Denver Post*.

PETER TRAVERS

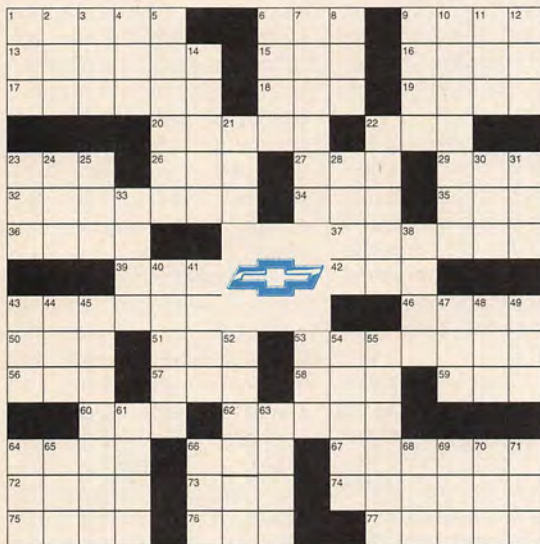


The Chevrolet Truck Across Down

SPORTword Puzzle

By Stanley Newman

"ALL-STAR GAME MVPs"



1. THE MOST DEPENDABLE, LONGEST-LASTING TRUCKS
6. ____ up (basketball shot)
9. Not genuine: Abbr.
13. Forward pass
15. Running back's stats: Abbr.
16. ____ Concepcion (All-Star MVP in '82)
17. "____ Angels" (De Niro film): 2 wds.
18. Home of the Jets and the Sharks: Abbr.
19. Adam and Eve's home
20. Norway money
22. Prefix for "practice"
23. Be on the disabled list
26. "A mouse!"
27. NBC owner before GE
29. Simpson's namesakes
32. See 62 Across
34. ____ flap (batting-helmet part)
35. Pigeon sound
36. Original Met Chacon
37. See 73 Across
39. Make a choice
42. Mauna ____ (Hawaiian volcano)
43. Leon ____ (All-Star MVP in '62)
46. Tease from the dugout
50. Gymnast's support
51. ____ the cup (miss, as a putt)
53. Bo ____ (All-Star MVP in '89)
56. AL or NL city: Abbr.
57. Swelled head
58. "Are you a man ____ mouse?": 2 words
59. Hit ____ run
60. Tasseled hat
62. With 32 Across, All-Star MVP in '86
64. First president to throw out an Opening Day ball
66. Goose ____ (shutout inning)
67. Box-score column: 2 wds.
72. Phrase of understanding: 2 wds.
73. With 37 Across, All-Star MVP in '91
74. Be angry
75. Willie ____ (All-Star MVP in '68)
76. Coveted NCAA position
77. Faced each other again

1. Crow's cry
2. "____ Haw"
3. Bobble the ball
4. Complete
5. Boggs, in '93
6. Fred ____ (All-Star MVP in '83)
7. Stay attached
8. Fashion monogram
9. Brainstorm
10. Bill ____ (All-Star MVP in '75)
11. "____ Got a Secret"
12. First-down yardage
14. Actress Sophia
21. Signs off on
22. Racing great Andretti
23. Star pitcher
24. Big Ten team: Abbr.
25. Hula Bowl souvenir
28. ____ Yastrzemski (All-Star MVP in '70)
30. With 52 Down, All-Star MVP in '72
31. Vance Law, to Vern
33. NL Rookie of the Year in '54
38. Oriole ____ at Camden Yards
40. Tony ____ (All-Star MVP in '67)
41. Math subject
43. IBF rival: Abbr.
44. Ooh and ____
45. Ken ____ (All-Star MVP in '92)
47. "Baseball ____ Funny Game" (Garagiola book): 2 wds.
48. ____ Sutton (All-Star MVP in '77)
49. Pass receiver
52. See 30 Down
53. Run for your life?
54. Neighborhoods
55. Gary ____ (All-Star MVP in '81)
61. Summers: French
63. Stare at
64. ____ Raines (All-Star MVP in '87)
65. Stubborn ____ mule: 2 wds.
66. College major, for short
68. ____ liner (low line drive)
69. 24-hour bank machine: Abbr.
70. "____ Boys of Summer"
71. Table-tennis match

See page 71 for Chevrolet Truck SPORTword Puzzle answers.

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THE DALLAS' JIMMY JOHNSON IS A COACH IN CONTROL BY STEVE BUCKLEY HAPPIEST MAN IN AMERICA?

Jimmy Johnson's house is a precisely groomed collection of bricks and logs, everything all neat and shiny and in its proper place. It is a home both bright and inviting, and in a room off the main parlor there sits one of those fat, wide video contraptions, and of course a fatter couch, the whole package forming a wonderful enticement to plop down and watch...well, watch some football, one assumes, but there's so much more: "I've been collecting laser discs," says Johnson, moving to a corner of the room where his treasured discs sit at alert. "My son just got me *Aliens*, but I think he only did that so he could come over here and watch it."

And there are the fish. Lots and lots of tropical fish. In the TV room. In the parlor. In the kitchen. In practically every room. Tropical fish. Jimmy Johnson loves his fish. "Yeah, they're great," he says, tapping at the glass just a little, in an attempt to inspire his tiny Gulf Coast lobster out of the shadows and into the spotlight. "And when one dies, you just throw it away. It's that easy."

See how easy it is? Jimmy Johnson loves his fish, loves 'em with an absolute passion, yet he is a coach of pets first and a lover of pets second, which means he is capable of making even the toughest roster decisions—even on the pet front—without being tripped up by some emotional lever. What's that? A fish died? Easy: Throw the





DAVE BLACK

Johnson has succeeded in surrounding himself with a wealth of talented players in Dallas, where he reigns as the best coach in the NFL.

fish out. Get a new fish. Talk to you in the morning. What's that? The Dallas Cowboys are a dead football team? Easy: Throw the football team out. Get a new football team. Talk to you in the morning. Same difference.

It is Jimmy Johnson's ability to make tough decisions without all the accompanying self-doubts and second-guessing that has lifted this finely coiffed native of Port Arthur, Texas, to the rafters of his profession, where he reigns as the Best Football Coach in America. You can talk all you want about your Levys, your Shulas, your (tee hee) Ditkas, your Parcellses and all those wonderful college coaches with their wonderful smiles and their wonderful TV shows ("Hey, there, sports fans, welcome to 'Inside Eagles Football,' with Boston College's very own Tom Coughlin!"), but only Jimmy Johnson is both at the top of his game *and* at the top of the standings.

He won a national title at the University of Miami, and he'd have won a couple of more had he not surrendered the well-stacked program he built to see what he could do with the gurgling-for-air Cowboys. Just look what he did with them 'boys: He ignored all the taunts, all the slings and all the arrows, simply turned the other way when folks down Dallas way spoke of the heinous crime Jerry Jones committed when he fired the great Tom Landry and brought in this *college* coach to run the team. Yes, he turned the other way

all right, and in just four seasons, Jimmy Johnson made it possible to refer to the Dallas Cowboys as America's Team without everybody in the room busting out into a chorus of knee-slappin' laughter.

Yes, America's Team happens also to

"The time I would have spent learning about the college players after the season...a lot of that time was lost. The Super Bowl really screwed things up."

be America's best team, by virtue of that Super Sunday poke in the eye that was delivered to the Buffalo Bills in January. Johnson, the Best Football Coach in America, is the man who brought the team there. Only to hear the man talk, it's as though the Super Bowl was just a great big inconvenience. "I really had a lot of catching up to do," he says. "I handle the draft and the evaluating of the college players, you

know? So the time I would have spent learning about the college players after the season...a lot of that time was lost. The Super Bowl really screwed things up."

He laughs a little. "But winning is still more fun," he says, wishing to make it quite clear that he's not upset, not really upset, about his superscouting being interfered with by Super Sunday. He says it again: "Winning is more fun. No complaints from here."

And it isn't just that he is the Best Football Coach in America, and it isn't just that he is the coach of the Best Football Team in America. No, it is also this: Jimmy Johnson is the Happiest Man in America, because he has the best job, the best toys, the best lifestyle (by his reckoning, which will be discussed *un momento*), the best fish...hell, he even survived a failed marriage: The divorce went well, and Jimmy's ex-wife is doing a lot of traveling, and they got along nicely last year when they were reunited at their son Brent's wedding.

Think about it. Rather, put yourself in Johnson's shoes for a moment. You are 50 years old. You love your job. You split up with your wife but in such a way that everybody, including your two grown sons, seem happy. You live alone in a fine home, which is paid for. You have two Corvettes, both paid for. Yes, you have a girlfriend, but she does not live with you. Instead, she lives only a few blocks away, and let's face it: Most American men

Newport



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would prefer to have their girlfriends living a few blocks away than in the same house. You enjoy your beer and your ribs...and your beer and your ribs and your beer and your ribs and your beer and your ribs. Yet the gut isn't all that bad, nothing that an occasional jog or a sit-up or two wouldn't take care of, and let's face that too: Most American men would prefer that their gut be merely not all that bad.

Jimmy Johnson takes us out of the house and into the sunshine, and soon we are on our way to the Cowboys' expansive training facility at Valley Ranch, which is only about three miles away. And, come to think of it, that's something else that most American men would prefer: an easy commute to the office. Asked if it's true that he is the embodiment of every middle-aged American's fantasy, Johnson checks off a list instead of providing an answer: "The two Corvettes, the tropical fish, living alone...making lots of money...yeah, it's pretty good," he says. "I don't know. I mean, I like it a lot. I'm doing a lot of things I've always wanted to do."

The question is repeated. *Are you the embodiment of every middle-aged American's fantasy?* "I guess a lot of people might get a spark out of this kind of living for a short time, but then they'd find out that this isn't truly what they want," he

says. "They'd all think it's a great deal at first, and then they'd realize it isn't such a great deal."

Pause. Laughter. More laughter. "And I mean not a great deal for them," he finally says. "But for me? It's a great life."

Yet it has not always been so great. Consider, first and foremost, all the stories

**"The two Corvettes,
the tropical fish, living
alone...making lots of
money...yeah, it's
pretty good."**

you've read—and there have been, what, millions of them?—about Jimmy Johnson being this tunnel-visioned, irons-to-the-fire football coach. The badly written pieces simply tap at the door to this man's head, mumbling on so drearly about how the guy is, oh, "focused," or "committed," or what have you. Tap a little harder and it becomes that much more obvious that Johnson's drive to build and win, build and win, build

and win has at times placed him at odds with his own family.

Yes, we told you the divorce went OK. Yes, we told you he gets along just swimmingly with his two sons, Brent and Chad, two fine-looking, professionally employed men who meet up at their dad's house from time to time to do guy stuff. But this is not to suggest that there haven't been some rocky moments, because, well, there have been some rocky moments.

Johnson admits that he forgets birthdays, that he can be distracted as to the little things that go into being a family man. Ask him if he might one day start a new family, as in fathering another child, and his answer is hasty, cold and somewhat discomforting: "No, there won't be a little kid and there won't be anybody living in my house."

Grandchildren, maybe?

"I don't think Brent and Chad are in any hurry to have kids. And if they do, they better not come over to my house and mess the place up."

Got that?

"Look," he says, "I don't think there were any mistakes raising my kids. Maybe there were things I'd have done differently, but they weren't mistakes. That's parenting. It seems like when they were growing up—or I guess I should say when we were growing up—I almost treated them



Johnson is the only coach in history with both Super Bowl and NCAA national championship titles.

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like players—very regimented. That's when I was there. I was gone most of the time."

If there was a defining moment for Jimmy Johnson—and we speak here of Johnson as a man, not simply a coach of football—it occurred during the summer of 1983, when he was preparing for his last year as head coach at Oklahoma State. Brent Johnson, having just completed his freshman year at the University of Texas, was in Stillwater for the summer, and on this night he was participating in a rite of growing up called staying out too late.

When Brent finally opened the door (too late), Coach Johnson was there to deliver an old chestnut that parents have been using since the beginning of time.

"Where have you been?"

Perhaps it was the tone of the question. Perhaps Brent simply had a bad night. Perhaps it was a combination of things. It's not important. What is important is that Brent Johnson turned and jabbed a finger into his father's chest, and he said, "No, the question is, where have you been?"

Brent, who these days is putting his striking good looks to use as a professional model, remembers the night well. "It just bothered me that he would be gone all the time, and then he'd come back to town and lay down all these

rules," he says. "I didn't think he was in a position to tell me what I can and can't do. So when he asked me where I'd been, I threw it back in his face."

But as hard as these words may sound, understand this about Brent Johnson: He loves his father. "Absolutely," he

"I want to be in control. If everyone knows everything about you, then you're no longer in control."

says. "And he was a great father. Things happened, but isn't that the case with all families?"

The Stillwater Incident clearly had an impact on Jimmy Johnson. Brent's decision to stand up to his father that night led to a lot of shouting and a lot of threats, but the shouting led to crying, and the crying led to hugging.

"He had some things to say that were probably on his mind for a long time," Jimmy Johnson says. "By the time it was

over, we both had tears rolling down our eyes. And it probably had more effect on me than it did on him. We were always very close, even when they were young. It's just that I wasn't there very often. And the times when we've been able to sit down and talk, those have always been very emotional times. That was one of them, and I learned from it."

Most of what has been written about Jimmy Johnson contains a collection of predictable staples. Went to high school with Janis Joplin. Played college football with Jerry Jones, who bought the Cowboys and then brought in Johnson. Tropical fish. Motivate! Motivate! Motivate! Hair. Beer. Ribs. Beer. Cars. Beer. Delegates authority. Made the Herschel Walker trade. Divorced. Girlfriend. Hair. Ribs. Beer.

Yet no story has told the entire story. No story has completely captured Jimmy Johnson the coach, and certainly no story has come close to capturing Jimmy Johnson the man.

But, oh, how we try.

"The things that have not been covered in all probability won't be covered," he says. "Because I'm not going to let them be covered. I want to be in control. If everyone knows everything about you, then you're no longer in control. And if you can't be in control, you can't coach. And coaching, that's what I do. It's all I do."★



Johnson and Dallas owner Jerry Jones have weathered the storms and are on the verge of a dynasty.

INSIDE THE NFL TRAINING CAMPS



FROM THE PROSPECT
OF A DALLAS DYNASTY
TO FREE AGENCY TO
BILL PARCELLS'
IMPACT, THERE'S AN
ABUNDANCE OF
INTRIGUING ISSUES TO
ADDRESS AS PLAYERS
MARCH INTO CAMP
By Craig Ellenport
and John Czarnecki

The dawning of a new era has arrived in the National Football League—unfortunately.

This new era is the result of that nasty process known as—gulp—free agency.

Yes, the insane spending sprees finally finagled their way into the NFL, and the immediate impact has been staggering. Throughout the off-season, owners and general managers forced lucrative long-term contracts on mediocre players and has-beens (“No, please, take it, we insist”), and now the NFL has taken on the look of major-league baseball’s sordid free-agent sideshow.

NFL owners don’t know what they’ve gotten themselves into.

The Reggie White Sweepstakes dominated the headlines during the off-season, but the Houston Oilers, not to be outdone, hired Buddy Ryan as defensive coordinator (Mr. Pardee, please stop trembling), Boomer Esiaison received a new lease on life by becoming a New York Jet, and Joe Gibbs called it quits. Yes, a lot’s happened in the new, less-than-improved NFL, and questions abound as players head into camp. Here are some of the most intriguing:

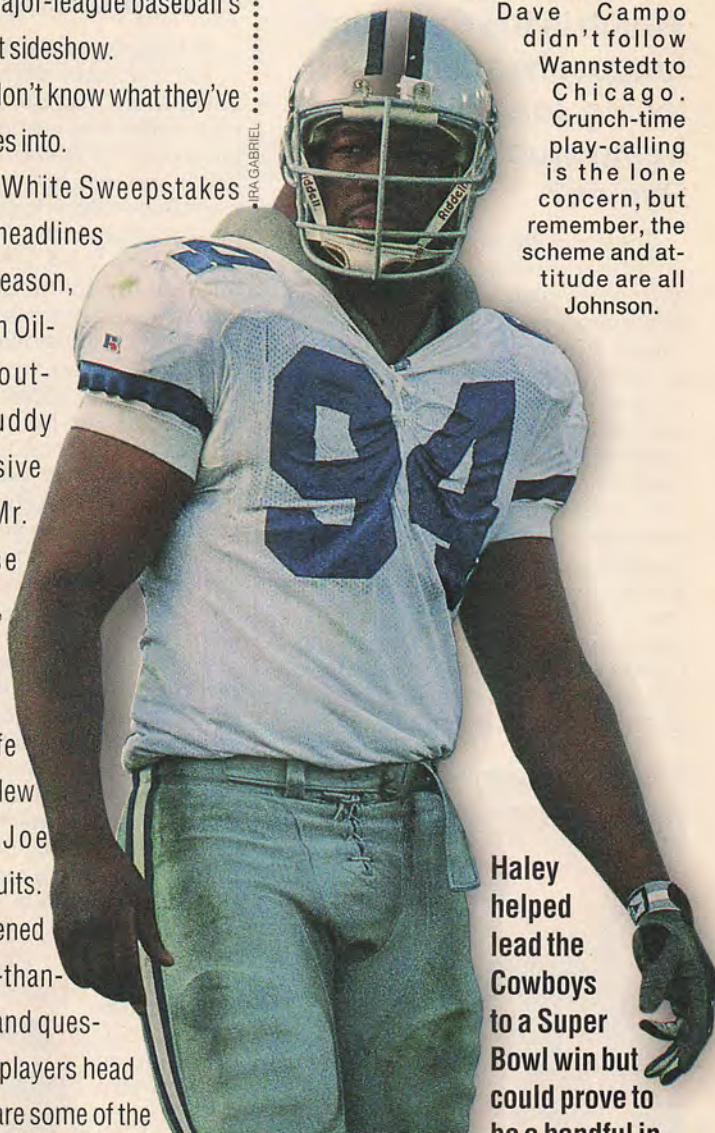
Will the Cowboys’ young defense flounder without Dave Wannstedt?

Probably not.

Head coach Jimmy Johnson’s background is defense, and Butch Davis, who was promoted from line coach when Wannstedt took the Bears’ head coaching job, has worked with Johnson since 1979. The Cowboys rotated 18 players on defense last season, and seven were linemen. Davis, a motivator and technician, as was Wannstedt, has been credited with the development of Jimmie Jones, Russell Maryland and Leon Lett. His lone worry will be controlling Charles Haley, the moody individualist.

Johnson is convinced that Davis is prepared for the challenge, and he made sure secondary coach

Dave Campo didn’t follow Wannstedt to Chicago. Crunch-time play-calling is the lone concern, but remember, the scheme and attitude are all Johnson.



Haley helped lead the Cowboys to a Super Bowl win but could prove to be a handful in the absence of Wannstedt.

INSIDE THE

NFL

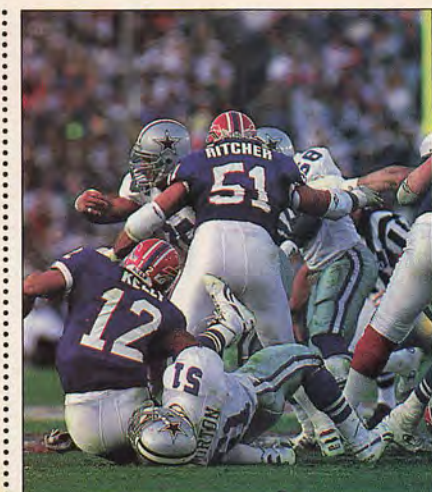


Which is the Redskins' biggest headache—losing Joe Gibbs or being stuck with Mark Rypien?

The league is curious to know how Rod Dowhower will respond as Washington's new offensive coordinator. He must monitor the offense and help choose the quarterback, Rypien or Cary Conklin. Dowhower has failed before but with inferior talent.

Other concerns: There wasn't a better sideline decision-maker than Gibbs, who resigned as head coach. Richie Petitbon, the Redskins' new head coach, probably won't be as understanding as Gibbs was last season when Rypien resembled a \$3 quarterback most of the time rather than a \$3 million one. "Rip did not have a good year," Petitbon says. "If Rip comes back, no problem. Guys can have bad years." Conklin vs. Rypien will be a bigger topic in Washington this summer than President Clinton's economic program.

Can Rypien bounce back?



Will the Bills self-destruct?

Is this the year Buffalo finally loses an AFC championship game?

It's highly probable.

Not because of the psychological barriers that Buffalo must overcome after that embarrassing 52-17 whipping by Dallas in Super Bowl XXVII; the Bills bounced back twice from Super Bowl losses to make repeat appearances.

Buffalo won't make a fourth straight trip to the Super Bowl because it'll be adversely affected by front-office instability—the losses of GM Bill Polian, who was fired one week after the Super Bowl, and assistant GM Bob Ferguson, who defected to the Broncos. Strangely, Bills owner Ralph Wilson now says the move to fire Polian was discussed before the season even began. The timing, however, was disconcerting. "He's basically the man who built the team," says center Kent Hull.

Polian, who by necessity shelled out big bucks to sign Buffalo's marquee players, lost a power struggle with team treasurer Jeff Littmann. Whether or not that means the team will cut back its payroll is beside the point; psychologically, it's a negative. While Polian's dismissal got more attention, the Bills will also miss Ferguson, regarded as one of the NFL's best evaluators of talent.

What can Ted Marchibroda do for an encore?

Taking the Colts to the Super Bowl would be a nice place to start.

But it won't happen, even though Marchibroda performed a miracle last year by transforming a 1-15 team into a fundamentally sound 9-7 unit that just missed the playoffs.

Based on that, should we expect anything less than a Super Bowl appearance? Sorry, but the stats show that Marchibroda won with mirrors in every corner of the field. How else could a team that finished dead last in the NFL in rushing offense and third-to-last in rushing defense post a winning record?

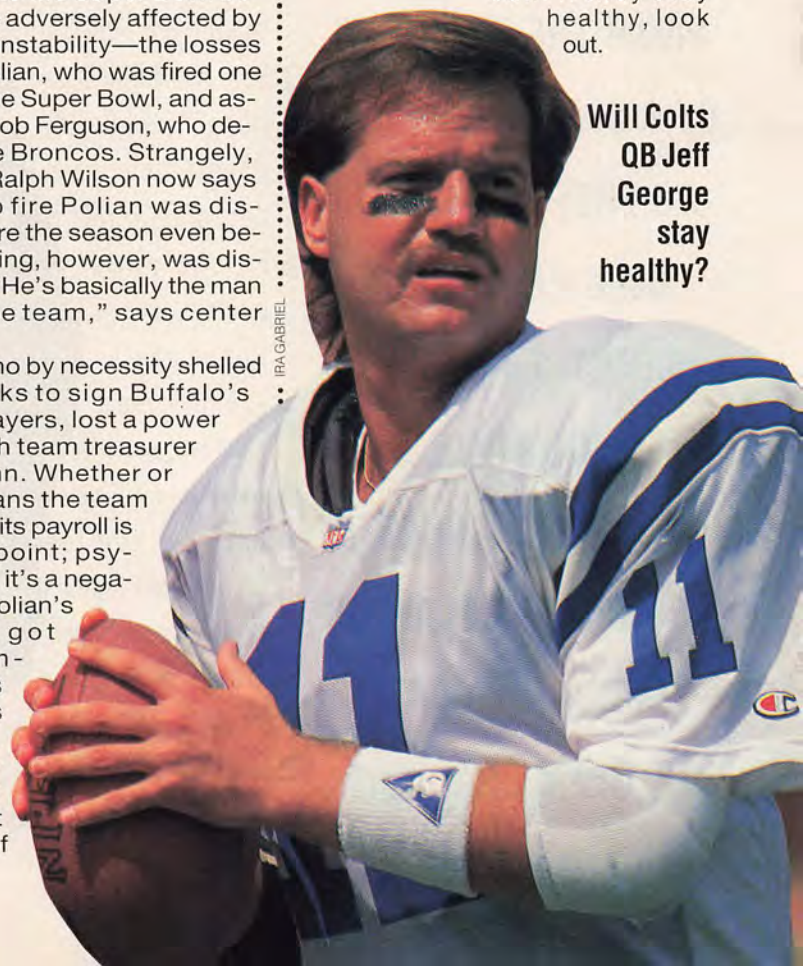
"Statistically, you can't prove that we won all those games," says Colts defensive coordinator Rick Venturi. "The challenge we now face is that we weren't a dominating 9-7."

Five of the Colts' wins were by four points or less, and two came in overtime. Indianapolis could find itself back in the cellar if those close games go the other way in '93.

One thing bodes well for the Colts: Their three marquee players—defensive rookies Steve Emtman and Quentin Coryatt and quarterback Jeff George—missed a combined 22 games last season.

If they stay healthy, look out.

Will Colts QB Jeff George stay healthy?





BOB ROSATO

Will Holland be back for the Pack?

Don't the Packers need a defense to make the playoffs?

Everyone adores Mike Holmgren, Brett Favre and Sterling Sharpe, but the Packers still have too many holes—even after landing Reggie White, the most prized free agent. They need to settle on a running back—Vince Workman or Darrell Thompson—behind their solid offensive line. Linebackers Johnny Holland and Mark D'Onofrio could both be AWOL this season. Holland underwent neck surgery. Though he has his heart set on a comeback, the odds are long. D'Onofrio had career-threatening hamstring surgery in February. "He's got the heart to overcome it, but nobody really knows," says GM Ron Wolf. The Pack needs one miracle here to truly challenge and make the playoffs.

What does Bucs coach Sam Wyche have to do to work his magic this year?

Sign David Copperfield.

Life will be better without Vinny Testaverde. Wyche loves Craig Erickson, but the former University of Miami quarterback hasn't thrown a pass in the NFL. The offensive line is solid, and Reggie Cobb is the best unknown offensive player in the league. But this club still doesn't know how to win, and Wyche isn't used to operating an offense around a running back such as Cobb.

What kind of offense can we expect from the Saints?

The Saints played musical chairs, dumping Bobby Hebert in favor of Atlanta retread Wade Wilson. (Out of spite, the Falcons then signed Hebert.) But Wilson doesn't have the No. 1 job locked up. Mike Buck, who's spent three years on the bench, has the arm to win the job. Steve Walsh also remains. All GM Jim Finks really wants is to throw the ball more, which is why the Saints let Ironhead Heyward go and replaced him with free agent Brad Muster, an excellent receiving back.

Can Jets running back Blair Thomas be saved?

New Jets running-back coach Johnny Roland had it easy when he was with the Bears. For most of his 10 years as running-back coach in Chicago, his prize pupil was Walter Payton. Roland's task is a lot tougher now: Help Thomas become the franchise back the Jets thought they had when they drafted him second overall in 1990.

Thomas has shown flashes of glittering brilliance, but he's hardly been impressive enough to satisfy second-guessing fans who can't forget that he was taken ahead of defensive superstars Cortez Kennedy and Junior Seau.

"I'd just like to bolster his confidence," says Roland, who likes what he's seen of Thomas—when healthy. Thomas led the Jets in rushing his first two seasons but gained only 440 yards last year while missing seven games with assorted injuries.

"God blessed Walter Payton with a great body, but he also worked at it," says Roland. "[Thomas] is in decent enough shape, but you'd like to get him a little stronger. If he's going to be the go-to guy, he's got to be in great physical shape to withstand a 16-game pounding."

Payton he's not, but if Thomas can stay out of the trainer's room and maintain his career 4.4-yard average per carry, the revamped Jets—who acquired Esiason, Ronnie Lott and Leonard Marshall during their earthshaking off-season improvement plan—might own New York.

INSIDE THE

NFL



Which coaches have the least job security?

Despite contract extensions for all three, Joe Bugel of Phoenix, Jerry Glanville of Atlanta, and Wayne Fontes of Detroit occupy hot seats. So does Houston's Jack Pardee, who has Buddy Ryan breathing down his neck.

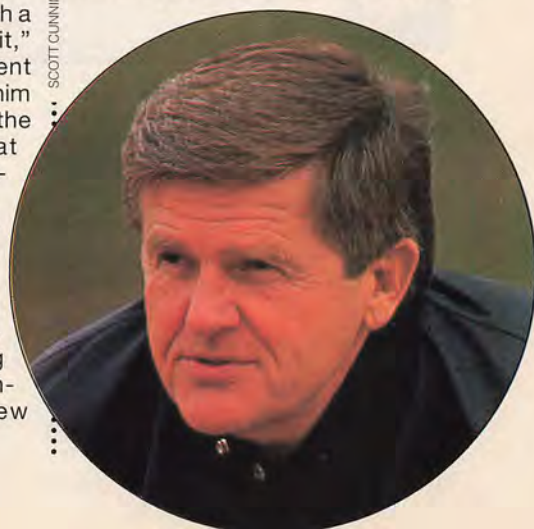
Having never come close to a winning season, Bugel must at least reach .500 to return in 1994.

Atlanta's ownership is strictly interested in filling the Georgia Dome and its luxury suites every Sunday, so Glanville must win. Mike Ditka could be a replacement candidate if his group fails to buy the Dolphins.

After changing his offensive and defensive coaches the past two off-seasons, Fontes has run out of excuses. Another 5-11 season and he's history.

As for Pardee, one Oilers veteran has said that if the club gets off to a slow start, he's out and Buddy's in.

Atlanta's Glanville: on the hot seat.



SCOTT CUNNINGHAM

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Pearl Jam—Ten. (Epic/Associated) 428+433

Arrested Development—3 Years, 5 Months, & 2 Days. (Chrysalis) 436+204



Kenny G—Breathless. (Arista) 448+142



Eric Clapton—Unplugged. (Reprise/Duck) 446+187



Madonna—Erotica. (Maverick/Sire/Warner) (edited) 453+555



Shai—If I Ever Fall In Love. (Gasoline Alley/MCA) 453+324

LL Cool J—14 Shots To The Dome. (Def Jam/Columbia) 456+525

TAKE YOUR PICK OF ANY 8

Billy Dean—Fire In The Dark (Liberty/SBK) 453+563

Bon Jovi—Keep The Faith (Jambco/Mercury) 451+310

Portrait (Capitol) 453+720

The Best Of The Georgia Satellites—Let It Rock (Elektra) 453+530

Christopher Williams—Changes (Uptown/MCA) 453+480

Silk—Lose Control (Keia/Elektra) 453+415



Reba McEntire—It's Your Call (MCA) 450+361

House Of Pain (Tommy Boy) 453+373

Nirvana—Incesticide (DGC) 453+340

Lemonheads—It's A Shame About Ray (Atlantic) 453+100



Neil Young—Harvest Moon (Reprise) 450+304

Erasure—Pop The First 20 Hits (Sire/Reprise) 453+084

Go West—Indian Summer (EMI) 453+035

Red Hot Chili Peppers—What Hits? (EMI) 448+209

Harry Connick, Jr.—25 (Columbia) 451+443

Talking Heads—Popular Favorites (Sire/Warner Bros.) 445+841/395+848

Meat Loaf—Bat Out Of Hell (Epic) 279+133

George Strait—Pure Country (MCA) 448+753

Ugly Kid Joe—America's Least Wanted (Mercury) 445+379

Sade—Love Deluxe (Epic) 449+439

The Chipmunks—Chipmunks In Low Places (Sony Kids' Music) 448+779

Otis Redding—The Dock Of The Bay (ATCO) 430+918

The Very Best Of The Righteous Brothers—Unchained Melody (Verve) 423+772

The Essential Little Richard (Specialty) 414+854

Marvin Gaye's Grt. Hits (Motown) 367+565

Vince Gill—I Still Believe In You (MCA) 448+571

Spin Doctors—Homebody Groove (Epic/Associated) 451+427



SNOW—12 Inches Of Snow (eastwest) 455+311

Tony Bennett—Perfectly Frank (Columbia) 445+486

Mary J. Blige—What's The 411? (Uptown/MCA) 445+197



Digable Planets—Reachin' (Pendulum) 455+451

10,000 Maniacs—Our Time In Eden (Elektra) 448+530

Prince And The New Power Generation (Edited) (Paisley Park) 448+514

Yes—Fragile (Atlantic) 351+957

Aretha Franklin—30 Greatest Hits (Atlantic) 350+793/390+799

Van Morrison—Moondance (Warner Bros.) 349+803

Jethro Tull—Aqualung (Chrysalis) 345+157

Alan Jackson—A Lot About Livin' (Arista) 447+458

Soul Asylum—Grave Dancers Union (Columbia) 445+510

INXS—Welcome To Wherever You Are (Atlantic) 445+023

"Honeymoon In Vegas"—Original Soundtrack (Epic/Soundtrax) 444+919

George Thorogood And The Destroyers—The Baddest Of The Bad (Hits) (EMI) 444+505



John Lennon—Grt. Hits (Capitol) 454+397

Ricky Van Shelton—Greatest Hits Plus (Columbia) 444+067

Trisha Yearwood—Hearts In Armor (MCA Nashville) 444+042

Dream Theater—Images And Words (ATCO) 442+848



Alice In Chains—Dirt (Columbia) 445+833

Temple Of The Dog (A&M) 442+780

Nirvana—Nevermind (DGC) 442+046

Heavy D. & The Boyz—Blue Funk (Uptown/MCA) 453+472

Megadeth—Countdown To Extinction (Capitol) 444+489

Mary Chapin Carpenter—Come On, Come On (Columbia) 440+560

Wilson Phillips—Shadows And Light (SBK) 440+271

Brandy—Brandy (A&M) 445+460

CLASSIC ROCK'S GREATEST HITS

Yes—Yesstory (ATCO) 446+211/396+218

Emerson, Lake & Palmer—The Atlantic Years (Atlantic) 444+414/394+411

Steely Dan—Gold—Grt. Hits (MCA) 435+693

The Allman Brothers Band—A Decade Of Hits 1969-79 (Polydor) 430+439

The Byrds—20 Essential Tracks (Columbia/Legacy) 426+940

Rod Stewart—Downtown Train/Selections From The Storyteller Anthology (Warner Bros.) 425+322

Rush—Chronicles (Mercury) 423+780/393+785

The Moody Blues—Grt. Hits (Polydor) 423+756

Eric Clapton—Time Pieces (Polydor) 423+467

David Bowie—Changes-bowie (Rykodisc) 412+247

Black Sabbath—We Sold Our Soul For Rock 'N' Roll (Warner Bros.) 404+632

Lynyrd Skynyrd—Skynyrd's Innys/Their Grt. Hits (MCA) 381+129

Grateful Dead—Skeletons From The Closet (Warner Bros.) 378+406

Roy Orbison—The All-Time Hits, Vols. 1 & 2 (CSP) 377+945

The Who—Who's Better, Who's Best (MCA) 376+657

Fleetwood Mac—Grt. Hits (Warner Bros.) 375+782

Journey's Greatest Hits (Columbia) 375+279

Steppenwolf—16 Grt. Hits (MCA) 372+425

REO Speedwagon—The Hits (Epic) 367+672

Best Of The Doors (Elektra) 357+616/397+612

Linda Ronstadt's Greatest Hits (Asylum) 286+740

The Police—Every Breath You Take—The Singles (A&M) 348+318

The Beach Boys—Made In The U.S.A. (Capitol) 346+445/396+440

Bad Company—10 From 6 (Atlantic) 341+313

The Cars Greatest Hits (Elektra) 339+903

Billy Joel—Grt. Hits, Vols. 1 & 2 (Columbia) 336+396/396+390

Joe Cocker's Grt. Hits (A&M) 320+911

Eagles Grt. Hits, Vol. 2 (Asylum) 317+768

Creedence Clearwater Revival—Chronicle—20 Grt. Hits (Fantasy) 308+049

Electric Light Orch.—ELO's Greatest Hits (Jet) 300+095

Alice Cooper's Grt. Hits (Warner Bros.) 291+476

James Taylor's Grt. Hits (Warner Bros.) 291+302

Best Of The Doobies (Warner Bros.) 291+278

The Steve Miller Band—Grt. Hits 1974-78 (Capitol) 290+171

Eagles—Grt. Hits, 1971-75 (Asylum) 287+003

Chicago—Greatest Hits (Columbia) 260+638

Santana's Grt. Hits (Columbia) 244+459

Janis Joplin's Grt. Hits (Columbia) 231+670

Simon & Garfunkel's Greatest Hits (Columbia) 219+477

John Lennon—Live In New York City (Capitol) 342+774

Living Colour—Stain (Epic) 454+330

Eagles—Hotel California (Asylum) 286+948



George Duke—Snapshot (Warner Bros.) 448+670

Smokey Robinson & The Miracles—Anthology (Motown) 336+057/396+051

Maceo Parker—Life On Planet Groove (Verve) 449+991

Tanya Tucker—Can't Run From Yourself (Liberty) 449+728

Chante Moore—Precious (Silas/MCA) 449+504

Shabba Ranks—X-Tra Naked (Epic) 449+199

Phil Collins—Serious Hits...Live (Atlantic) 448+944

"Trespass"—Orig. Sndtrk. (Warner Bros./Sire) 448+720

George Duke—Snapshot (Warner Bros.) 448+670

Randy Travis—Greatest Hits Volume 1 (Warner Bros.) 448+654

Nine Inch Nails—Broken (Interscope) 448+548

Extreme—III Sides To Every Story (A&M) 447+540

Foreigner—The Very Best...And Beyond (Atlantic) 447+524

After 7—Takin' My Time (Virgin) 446+971

Patty Smyth (MCA) 446+773

Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble—In The Beginning (Epic) 446+765

Bad Company—Here Comes Trouble (ATCO) 446+203

Shawn Colvin—Fat City (Columbia) 446+021

Denis Leary—No Cure For Cancer (A&M) 445+397

Travis Tritt—T-R-O-U-B-L-E (Warner Bros.) 445+767

Public Enemy—Greatest Misses (Def Jam/Chaos) 445+478

Alexander O'Neal—Love Makes No Sense (A&M) 454+447



Michael Bolton—Timeless (The Classics) (Columbia) 445+494

Here are 70 more selections to choose from.

Elton John—Greatest Hits 1976-86 (MCA) 450-353

The Brecker Brothers—Return Of The Brecker Brothers (GRP) 448-191

Damn Yankees—Don't Tread (Warner Bros.) 445-759

Hi-Five—Keep It Goin' On (Jive) 444-331

Lionel Richie—Back To Front (Motown) 441-063

Neil Diamond—The Grt. Hits (Columbia) 439-778/399-774

Firehouse—Hold Your Fire (Epic) 439-448

Faith No More—Angel Dust (Reprise/Slash) 439-307

Tears For Fears—Tears Roll Down (The Hits 1982-92) (Fontana) 436-006

Pantera—Vulgar Display Of Power (ATCO) 435-305



Genesis—We Can't Dance (Atlantic) 448-936

"Wayne's World" (Sndtrk.) (Reprise) 434-498

Jodeci—Forever My Lady (MCA) 430-959

Brooks & Dunn—Brand New Man (Arista) 429-969

Bryan Adams—Waking Up The Neighbours (A&M) 429-779

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Mötley Crüe—Decade Of Decadence '81-'91 (Elektra) 429-316

Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble—Sky Is Crying (Epic) 429-258

Soundgarden—Badmotorfinger (A&M) 428-250

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Vanessa Williams—The Comfort Zone (Wing) 426-510

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Cream—Strange Brew (Polydor) 423-475

Frank Sinatra—The Capitol Collector's Series (Capitol) 421-651

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Luther Vandross—Power Of Love (Epic) 418-848

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R.E.M.—Out Of Time (Warner Bros.) 417-923

Peter Gabriel—Shaking The Tree (Geffen) 415-968

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Paul Simon—The Rhythm Of The Saints (Warner Bros.) 412-809

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L.L. Cool J—Mama Said Knock You Out (Def Jam/Columbia) 411-165

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The Cure—Standing On A Beach—The Singles (Elektra) 346-858

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Bob James & Earl Klugh—Cool (Warner Bros.) 439-232

AC/DC—Live (ATCO) 453-217

k.d. lang—Ingenue (Warner Bros./Sire) 435-404

Ministry—Psalm 96 (Warner Bros./Sire) 433-748

Eric Clapton—"Rush" (Sndtrk.) (Reprise) 433-714

"Beauty & The Beast" (Sndtrk.) (Walt Disney Records) 432-690

Enya—Shepherd Moons (Reprise) 431-718

Bobby Brown—Bobby (MCA) 445-403

Amy Grant—Heart In Motion (A&M) 424-457

Bonnie Raitt—Luck Of The Draw (Capitol) 423-186

Aerosmith—Pump (Geffen) 388-009

Selections with two numbers contain 2 CDs and count as 2—so write in both numbers.

Contains explicit lyrics which may be objectionable to some members.

Guns N' Roses—Use Your Illusion II (Geffen) 442-038

Mariah Carey—MTV Unplugged (Columbia) 441-790

Jade—Jade To The Max (Giant/Reprise) 453-068

En Vogue—Funky Divas (eastwest) 435-750

Kris Kross—Totally Krossed Out (Ruffhouse/Columbia) 435-743

TLC—Oooooohhh... (LaFace) 434-621

Michael Jackson—Dangerous (Epic) 433-920

Natalie Cole—Unforgettable (Elektra) 422-279

Van Halen—For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge (Warner Bros.) 420-273

Michael Bolton—Time, Love & Tenderness (Columbia) 415-711

George Michael—Listen Without Prejudice, Vol. 1 (Columbia) 411-181

AC/DC—The Razors' Edge (ATCO) 441-662

Jon Secada (SBK) 438-184

Toto—Past To Present 1977-1990 (Columbia) 411-371

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U2—Achtung Baby (Island) 431-213

Wynonna Judd—Wynonna (MCA/Curb) 435-909

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Paula Abdul—Spellbound (Virgin) 420-257

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Madonna—The Immaculate Collection (Warner Bros./Sire) 414-557

Technotronic—Pump Up The Jam (SBK) 405-209

Jimmy Buffett—Songs You Know By Heart (MCA) 339-911

Bob Marley & The Wailers—Legend (Tuff Gong/Island) 337-857

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Garth Brooks—Ropin' The Wind (Liberty) 428-862

Toad The Wet Sprocket—Fear (Columbia) 428-466

The B-52's—Good Stuff (Reprise) 439-281

Phish—Rift (Elektra) 454-322

Lynyrd Skynyrd—Last Rebel (Atlantic) 454-538

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Dada—Puzzle (I.R.S.) 455-212

Poison—Native Tongue (Capitol) 454-926

Yellowjackets—Like A River (GRP) 454-165

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Red Hot Chili Peppers—Blood Sugar Sex Magik (Warner Bros.) 428-367

Boyz II Men—Cooler-ly-highharmy (Motown) 424-754

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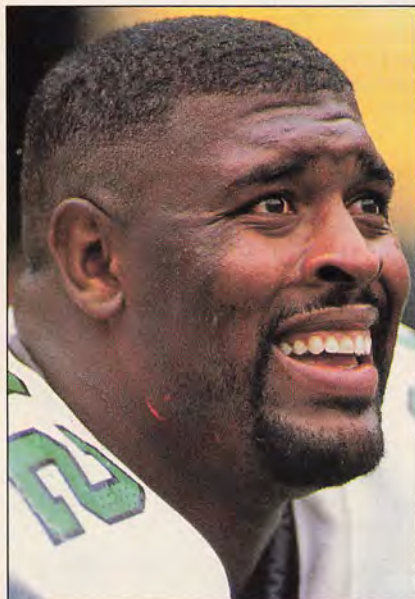
NFL



Can the Eagles replace Reggie White?

Probably not.

But signing top-notch defensive end Tim Harris via free agency was a heckuva start. Harris, a 49er last season, gives the Eagles devastating bookend defensive ends that will frighten opposing quarterbacks silly. Harris, who'll play left end, tied for second in the NFL with 17 sacks, while Clyde Simmons, who'll play on the right side, was tops in the NFL with 19 sacks. Yeah, the Eagles will miss White, but maybe not as much as people think.



White will be missed in Philly.



BRUCE SCHWARTZMAN

Can the Patriots win the AFC title?

Don't be silly.

But here's a story that illustrates how Bill Parcells will turn New England's fortunes around—in a hurry:

Wide receiver Hart Lee Dykes, a 1989 first-round draft pick who has broken his kneecap twice and has yet to make an impact, told Parcells he was taking a week off from his rehabilitation program. Parcells responded by telling Dykes to clean out his locker. Dykes relented and told Parcells he would only be gone for a long weekend. "Fine," the coach told him, "then I'll clean out your locker for you."

Can Moon break through at last?

Will the Oilers mend the hearts they've broken—or will they crush them again?

Actually, let's break this down into several questions:

1. Will the '93 Oilers play like the team that led Buffalo, 35-3, at half-time of last season's wild-card game, or will they resemble the team that blew that lead?

2. Will Buddy Ryan bring an NFC toughness that will help Houston go to its first Super Bowl, or will Ryan's unpredictable behavior and abrasive nature become a distraction?

3. Was the front office too generous (giving backup quarterback Cody Carlson a three-year, \$8.85 million contract) or too cheap (by trying, without success, to give receiver Curtis Duncan only half of his \$15,000 Pro Bowl bonus because he had finished in a tie in the Pro Bowl voting)?

4. Will the Oilers employ a tight end for the first time since 1989? "A tight end isn't going to get us to the Super Bowl," quarterback Warren Moon says. "I'm tired of people talking about us having a tight end."

Too bad, Warren: The guy talking about it the most is team owner Bud Adams.

What a soap opera they've got down there in Oilers country. It'd make a heck of a sitcom, don't you think?

JEFF NIXON/ALLSPORT USA

Can Steve Beuerlein save Joe Bugel's job in Phoenix?

Cardinals owner Bill Bidwill was impressively aggressive in the free-agent market—former Redskin Gary Clark figures to be Beuerlein's favorite target—as Bugel attempts to generate some offense in his fourth season in the sun. Beuerlein was signed because of the coaching staff's questions about Timm Rosenbach's desire. Because of injuries, Rosenbach has started only three games in the last two years, and the physical pain, along with the Sun Devil Stadium boos, have undermined his confidence.

Rosenbach no longer in picture.



KIRK SCHULEA

How will the Bears focus without their retired leader, Mike Singletary?

This training camp will be a true test of the Bears' heart. The only game the team showed up for in the second half of last

season was when it got emotional in Singletary's final home game and smothered the Steelers. In the 11 seasons previous to last, Singletary ranked either first or second on the team in tackles. New coach Dave Wannstedt isn't convinced Dante Jones can fill the vacancy, but he has the job. In the absence of Singletary, look for defenders such as Ron Cox and John Mangum to grow into leaders.



Will Young capture his first title?

Can Steve Young win a Super Bowl with Joe Montana out of the picture?

The 49ers' braintrust has its doubts, which is why owner Eddie DeBartolo encouraged Joe to stay and desperately sought Notre Dame's Rick Mirer. Yet, Young does remain the reigning MVP of the league and should thrive in an atmosphere void of Montana; the two weren't friends, and Joe was never much help on the sidelines. What hangs over Young now is his subpar performance against the Cowboys in the NFC title game. He needs to develop more patience in the pocket.

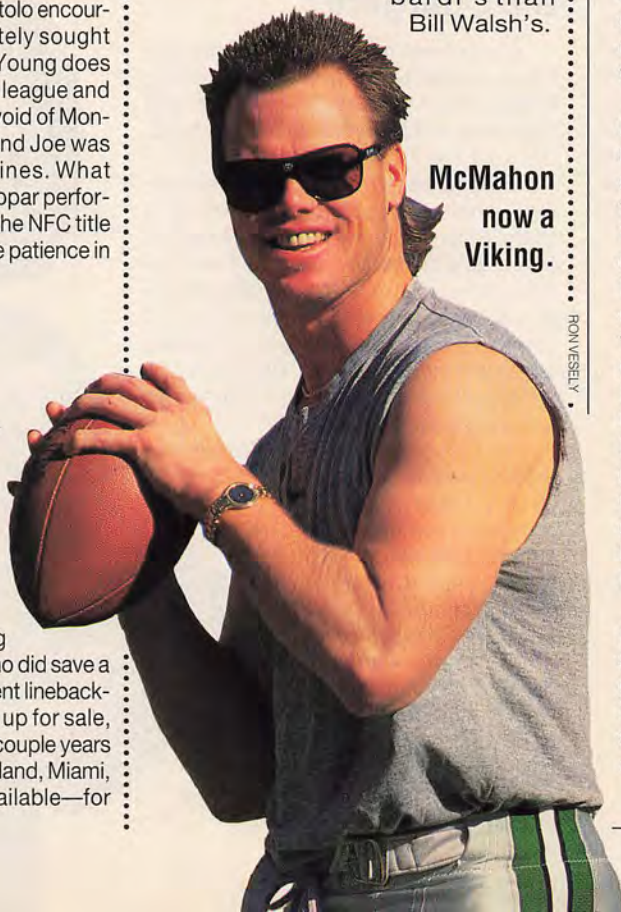
Can money buy happiness?

Not in the case of Rams owner Georgia Frontiere. Her franchise is no longer an annual playoff threat, and her front office blundered by losing tackle Gerald Perry to free agency and then overpaying defensive end Fred Stokes, who the team acquired after previously losing him through Plan B. Frontiere, who did save a little face by signing Bills free-agent linebacker Shane Conlan, has her team up for sale, and with corporate ownership a couple years away, other franchises (New England, Miami, Seattle and Tampa Bay) are available—for \$110 to \$145 million.

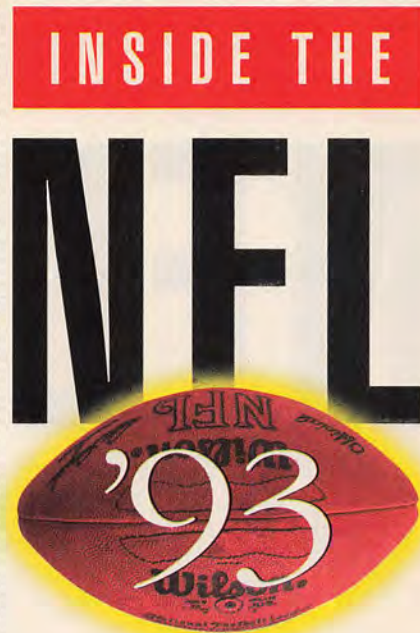
Isn't Jim McMahon a little too brittle to be the Vikings' starting quarterback?

Coach Dennis Green partially accepts this theory. "I'm counting on him for 10, 11 games minimum," Green says.

Without question, a 33-year-old McMahon has better skills than Rich Gannon or Sean Salisbury. McMahon is tough, and Green prefers that linebacker mentality at QB. Gannon's penchant to moan after things deteriorated last season put him in Green's doghouse. Besides, he and Salisbury threw for only three touchdowns in Minnesota's final 10 games. Everyone associates offense with Green, but his philosophy is closer to Vince Lombardi's than Bill Walsh's.



McMahon now a Viking.



Who says the Broncos don't want to win?

Dan Reeves did, sort of.

After being ousted in Denver, Reeves implied that Broncos owner Pat Bowlen wasn't willing to spend the money it took to win in the NFL. "They were not cheap-shot comments," says one team official, "but there is a certain element that will jump on that."

Bowlen took a big hit in the local media after Reeves' comment but then worked quickly to destroy the perception that he wasn't committed to winning. He not only satisfied the Broncos' meal ticket by signing John Elway to a four-year, \$20 million contract, but he ordered his front office to be an aggressive participant in free agency. So Denver shored up its offensive line by signing Houston tackle Don Maggs and Minnesota guard Brian Habib to lucrative deals, then took some pressure off Elway and the passing game by signing San Diego fullback Rod Bernstine.

Reeves credits Denver's new personnel director Bob Ferguson. "I have to congratulate Fergie," Reeves was quoted as saying. "He got Pat Bowlen to spend more money in 1½ months than I did in 8½ years."

INSIDE THE NFL



Is Dan Reeves serious about Phil Simms quarterbacking the Giants?

Reeves, the Giants' new head coach, doesn't have many options. Jeff Hostetler refused to spend March through May in New Jersey learning a new offense, so the team allowed him to go west to the Raiders. So Reeves is stuck with Simms, who could have signed with the Patriots or Redskins. Not long ago, Simms shredded Reeves' Broncos in a Super Bowl, but he turns 38 in November and has failed to survive in each of the last three seasons. Simms, though, will be willing to work with the Giants' quarterbacks of the future, Dave Brown and Ken Graham. Despite the arrival of Reeves, Simms and Lawrence Taylor remain this team's leaders, a sign the Giants are living in the past.

Does O.J. stand for "Offensive Judge"?

NFL analyst O.J. Simpson castigated head coach Marty Schottenheimer last season for the Chiefs' conservative, ineffective offense, sparking a minifued that prompted Schottenheimer to tell Juice to mind his own damn business. Juice was justified in the end, however. The Chiefs' running game disappeared down the stretch, and Kansas City made an early exit from the playoffs. Shortly thereafter, the Chiefs hired Bill Walsh-disciple Paul Hackett as offensive coordinator, and Hackett has vowed to open up the attack.

John Czarnecki, a CBS consultant on NFL telecasts, handled all NFC items. Craig Ellenport, a regular football contributor for SPORT, handled the AFC.

What's happened to the Raiders' mystique?

It's just gone, baby.

Let's face it: Al Davis has lost the knack for signing other teams' rejects and transforming them into warriors. He tried it again last year with Atlanta's first-round draft bust, linebacker Aundray Bruce, and the reclamation project failed. Ditto for Eric Dickerson. And what about Kid Quarterback, Todd Marinovich? Just because he's left-handed

and a little flaky doesn't mean he's the next Ken Stabler, which he's not.

"Times have changed," former Raiders linebacker Phil Villapiano says. "There's not the same feel anymore."

Villapiano was a Raiders' Raider, an animated player whose spirit and desire matched his ability. Spirit, he says, is what's missing in today's Raiders. "I remember when I used to brag about the Raiders being a team—no individuals," he says. "And that used to get me excited. The way it is now...they don't even look like they care half the time."

How the mighty have crumbled.



IRA GABRIEL

Bieniemy and the Chargers hope to avoid a letdown in '93.

Who put the charge in the Chargers?

Bobby Ross wasn't the only first-year head coach to engineer a startling turnaround in '92 (Green, Holmgren, and Pittsburgh's Bill Cowher were the others). But Ross was the most enthusiastic.

Bringing the rah-rah mentality from college, where he coached the previous 10 years, Ross refused to allow his players to sulk after a dismal 0-4 start. "Believe it or not, and, probably, I was the only person who believed it, I said, 'You're still not out of the playoffs. You're at 0-4, but there's still a lot of the season left,'" Ross says. "So we didn't panic, we didn't holler and scream. We just kept working."

The Chargers, lo and behold, became the first team ever to make the playoffs after an 0-4 start. Now all they have to do is avoid the letdown that teams such as Detroit and Atlanta suffered a year after their breakthrough campaigns in 1991—a possibility Ross scoffs at.

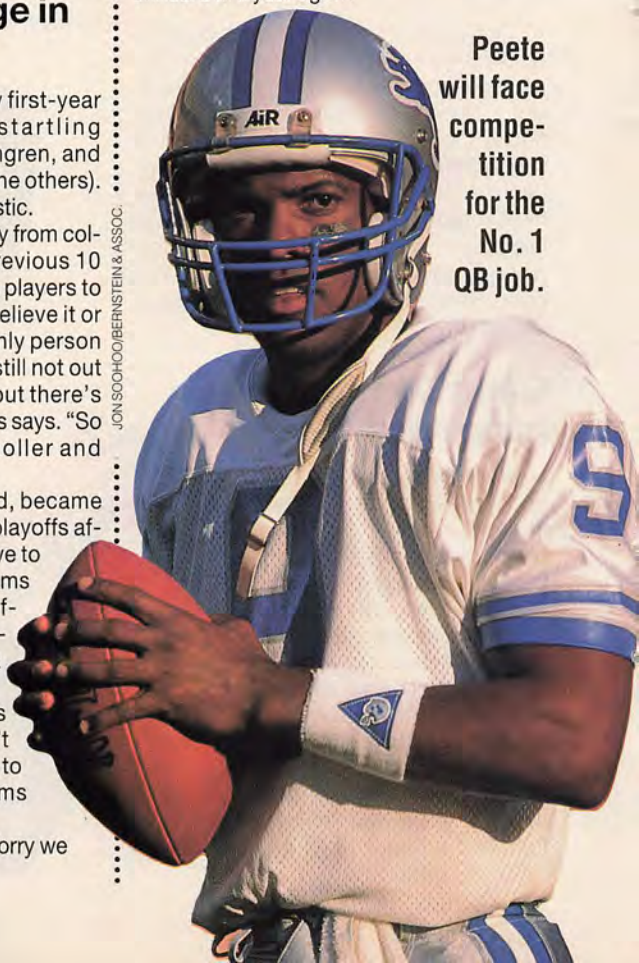
"To me," he says, "that's negative thinking, and I wouldn't want to think about it. I'm going to think positively about the teams that built on their success."

OK, Bobby, simmer down. Sorry we brought it up.

How will the Lions approach their quarterback controversy?

With his job on the line, Fontes has decided to have competition at the position rather than handing the job to Rodney Peete. "After the second game of the pre-season, I hope to have a decision," Fontes says. Based on Andre Ware's performance at the end of last season, the Lions are no longer referring to him as a No. 1 bust. In fact, Ware could be the starter, something unheard of a year ago.★

Peete will face competition for the No. 1 QB job.



JON SOCHOO/BERNSTEIN & ASSOC.



Right brain



Left brain

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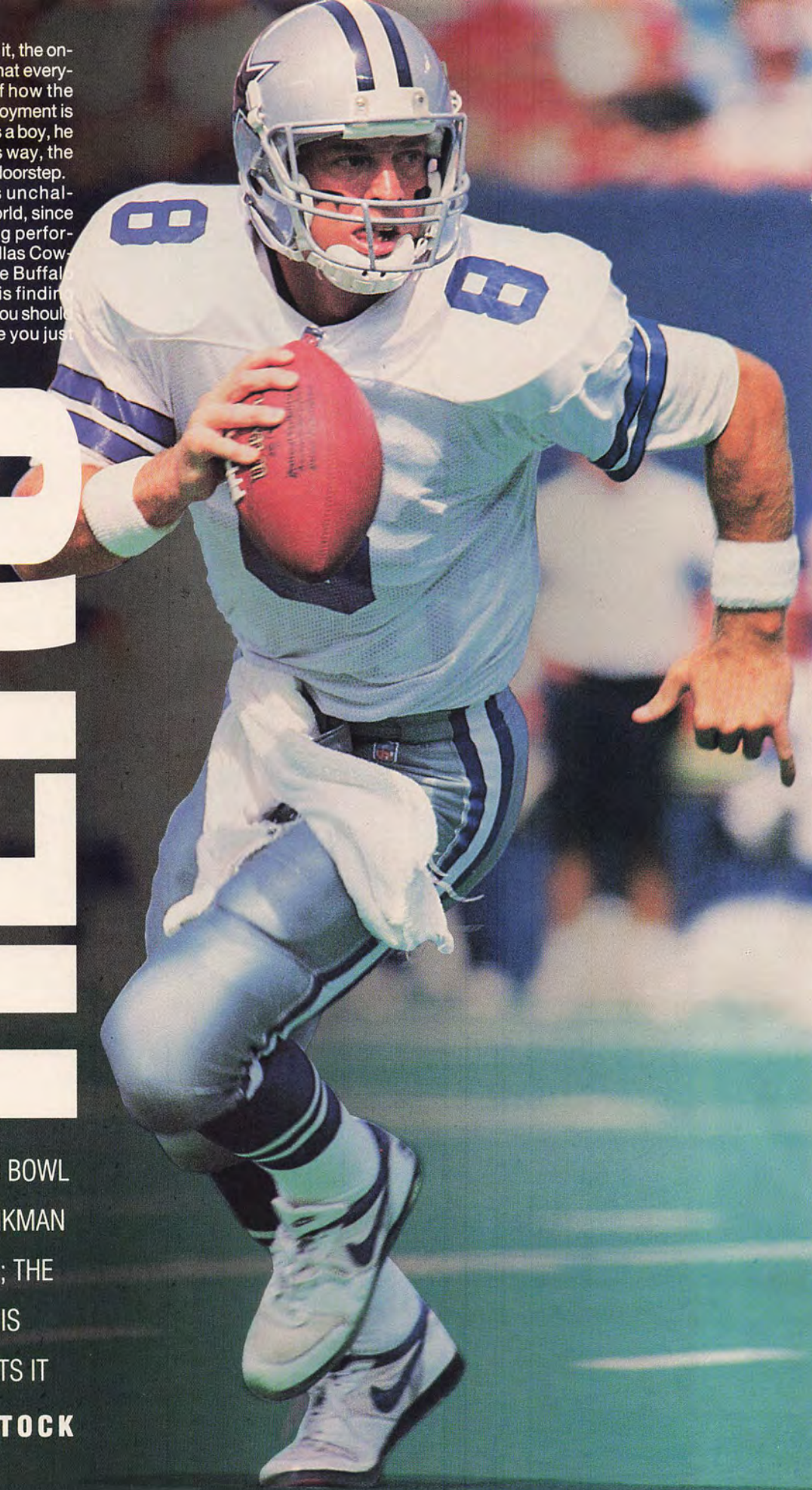
The way Troy Aikman sees it, the only problem with fame is that everybody knows you, sort of how the only downside to unemployment is that it doesn't pay well. As a boy, he dreamed it would be this way, the fans at his feet, the world at his doorstep.

But now that Aikman sits unchallenged atop the pro football world, since his near-perfect MVP-winning performance quarterbacking the Dallas Cowboys to a 52-17 rub-out of the Buffalo Bills in Super Bowl XXVII, he is finding fame to be one of those things you should be careful to wish for because you just

GO FOR IT

HIS BRILLIANT SUPER BOWL
CATAPULTED TROY AIKMAN
TO SUPERSTARDOM; THE
ONLY QUESTION IS
WHETHER HE WANTS IT

BY JEFF WEINSTOCK





Troy Aikman, Dallas Cowboys

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Moon, who prefers the “zig out”

Marino, best known for his

“buttonhooks.” And

Cunningham, who is famous for

his “fly” patterns. They’ve

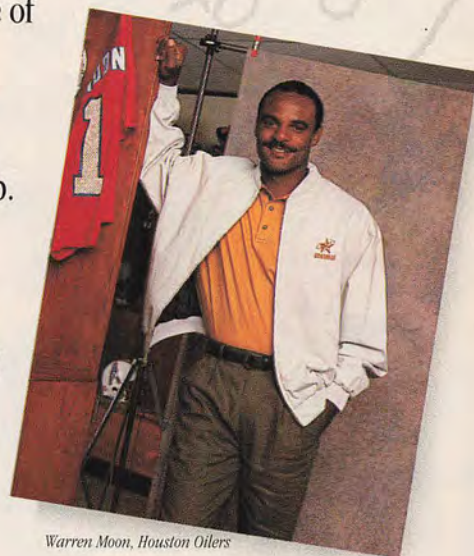
all teamed up to create

this new line of classic

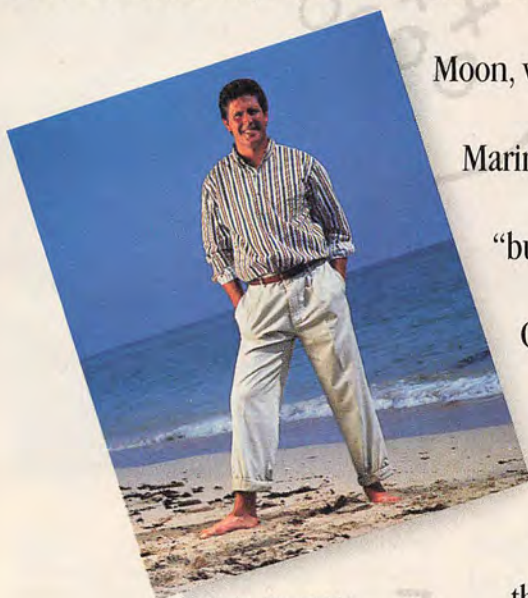
clothing called QBC. It's a line of sportswear

patterned after the quarterbacks’

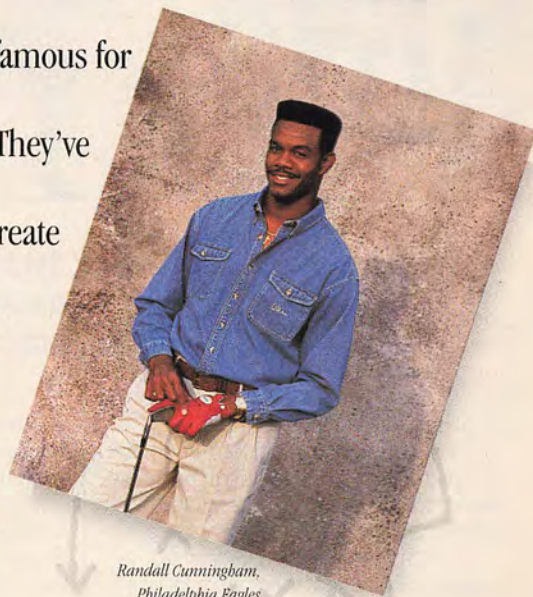
favorite lifestyle. Their own.



Warren Moon, Houston Oilers



Dan Marino, Miami Dolphins

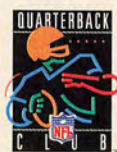


Randall Cunningham, Philadelphia Eagles



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Sportswear of the Quarterbacks.



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JIM EVERETT JIM HARBAUGH JEFF HOSTETLER JIM KELLY BERNIE KOSAR DAN MARINO
WARREN MOON MARK RYPIEN PHIL SIMMS STEVE YOUNG



might get it.

Aikman, a country music nut who hangs with the linemen and, all things considered, would rather be in Nashville, prefers to speak of the big picture, the one he fears could slip from view as his public profile expands. "In the big picture," Aikman will tell you, "football's nothing."

But it's the small picture that occupies most people's attention, and in Dallas, football, rather than nothing, is just about everything. Football, high school football and Ross Perot. Everything else is a nuisance.

"I like to be able to be [in] control...and now I can't," says Aikman. "I like to be able to move in and out of the spotlight as I

see of me or they won't."

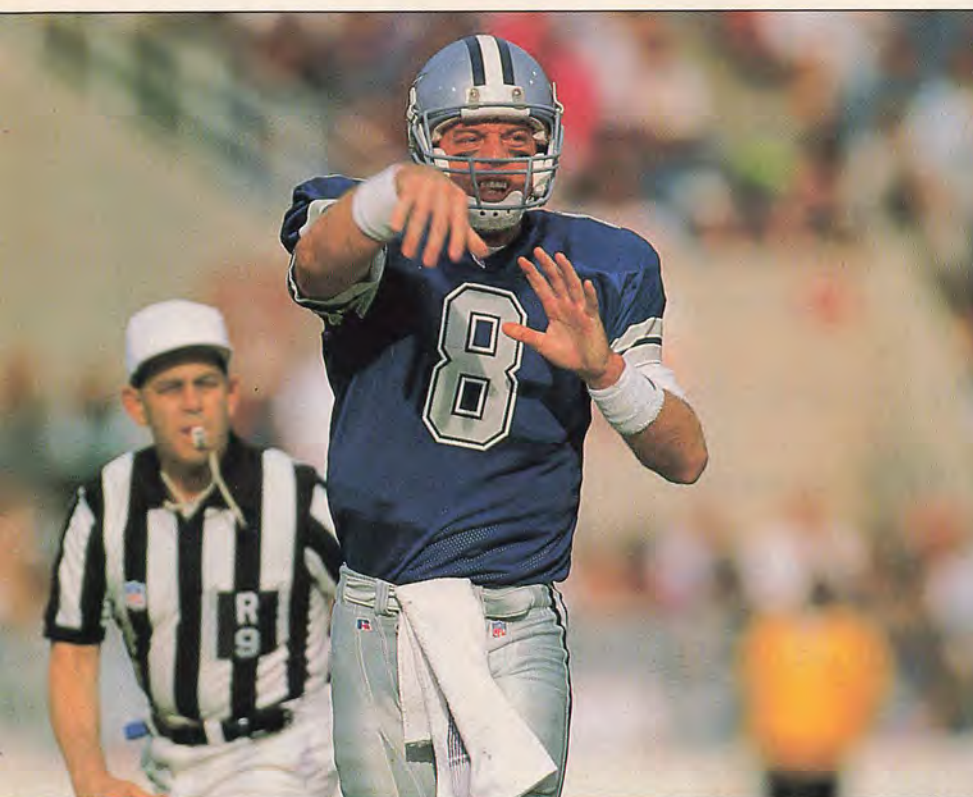
Aikman's agent, quarterback monopolist Leigh Steinberg, boasted right after the Super Bowl that his client's movie-star name and features made him "a marketing dream" and would quickly hike Aikman's off-the-field income into seven figures. But Steinberg recognizes that Aikman doesn't have the nature—or the stomach—to cozy up to the advertising world.

"That's always been a limitation," Steinberg says. "Troy has a toleration level for what he would consider BS of like about 1½ seconds. So the whole concept of marketing Troy Aikman is, what do they call it, an oxymoron.

"Even if he takes one out of every 10

that was in free-fall following a 3-13 season and the graceless firing of Tom Landry, the Cowboys' coach since the inception of the franchise. But Aikman's rookie season turned into a horror show. The Cowboys went 1-15, and opposing defensive linemen kicked him around like a hacksack. His toughness was admirable but endangering. Against Phoenix, he stepped into the jaw of a fierce pass rush and delivered a miraculous go-ahead touchdown pass late in the fourth quarter and was knocked cold, blood running from his ear.

"I didn't even know that we had completed the pass," Aikman remembers. "There were a lot of people scared. They



"When I really get on a roll throwing the football, I feel like I can take control of the game and that I'm gonna complete every pass I throw."

MIKE POWELL/ALLSPORT USA wish. I openly admit it that, yeah, there is a side of me that enjoys it and kind of is pulled toward it. But at the same time, there are a lot of times when I don't want any part of it and like to remove myself from it, and now the only thing is, in order to do that I have to stay home."

Off his Super Bowl performance, Aikman is set to make a killing in endorsements, but he says he is determined not to let the image-makers define who he is.

"I'm not out to sell myself to anybody," he says. "I know that there are a lot of athletes who concentrate on marketing themselves and how they're going to handle themselves....I'm not trying to paint a picture of somebody that I'm not....It will be like that with endorsements. People will either like what they

Set to make a killing in endorsements, Aikman says he won't let image-makers define who he is.

endorsement opportunities, even if he takes one out of every 20 speaking engagements, it's still going to make a significant impact....A quarterback who has a dramatic game and is MVP in a winning Super Bowl effort has as dramatic a public profile as it's possible to have in sports."

It wasn't long ago that Aikman couldn't have imagined the luxury of having to worry about too much success. The top pick in the 1989 NFL draft, Aikman was brought to Dallas to resurrect a proud organization

that thought I was either dead or paralyzed; I just didn't move for 10 minutes. When I finally came around, Coach [Jimmy] Johnson was leaning over me, and he said, 'Nice pass.'"

The blow ended Aikman's season, and he watched as Phoenix fired back less than a minute later with the game-winning score, leaving him 0-11 as a starter in his first year.

"That was probably as low as I got....I knew it couldn't get worse."

Things not only didn't get worse, they got a good deal better and with remarkable speed. Dallas jumped to 7-9 the next year. Before the '91 season, Norv Turner joined Jimmy Johnson's staff as offensive coordinator and implemented a quick-pass offense that

played to Aikman's strengths. Aikman's play, along with his surrounding teammates', soared.

Now his Super Bowl success has suddenly made him the game's pre-eminent star. In the dizzying gang rush of media immediately following the game, he could hardly manufacture any summary statement of what he was feeling. Even now, with the benefit of perspective, the experience seems somewhat hazy.

"It was almost like a dream, all [Super Bowl] week," Aikman says. "It was very strange. I kept telling myself, 'We're playing the Super Bowl.' Then the day before the game, we were taking the bus

went to sleep, and I slept for nine hours. I've never slept better in my life. The whole thing surrounding it was very strange because I was very at ease and calm through it all."

The game itself, as is custom, turned into a walkover. Aikman made a meal out of Buffalo's defense, hitting on 22 of 30 passes for 273 yards and four touchdowns. Overall, his postseason numbers are now tops in NFL history in several categories.

"At some point in the second quarter," he says, "I can't place the point when, it might've been right after the touchdown to Michael Irvin, at that point is when I felt that I had control of the ball

between the quarterback who stands tall and hard in the pocket and the man who raised him isn't missed.

"Part of the reason I play the way that I play," says Aikman, "and don't fear getting hit—people say I take unnecessary hits—I think that stems from back when I was younger and seeing how hard he worked and how tough he was and wanting to prove to him that I was tough too. I think that deep down, I always wanted to prove that I was as tough as he was and that I could take anything that he had to give. And I think that through football I was able to prove that to him."

The only possible rough spot in an



IRA GABRIEL

ride to our hotel where we were staying in Santa Monica. It was really strange because everything just seemed so peaceful to me at the time, driving on the bus and just seeing all the pageantry and the color that went with the Super Bowl and driving into the Rose Bowl the day before the game for our walk-through. It was almost like I was watching myself from above. Everything was so serene.

"The night before the game, I talked to a friend of mine. I talked to her 'til like midnight, and she said, 'Well, you better get some sleep for the game tomorrow,' and I said, 'I probably won't be able to sleep anyway, so I'm not worried about it.' We ended up talking 'til like 1:00 in the morning, just to have somebody to talk to. Then when I got off the phone, I

game. And when I really get on a roll throwing the football, I feel like I can take control of the game and that I'm gonna complete every pass I throw. And in the second quarter, that's when I got into that groove and I felt there was no way they were going to be able to stop us offensively, and they didn't."

He says he always expected to get to this level, having prepared for it since he was 9 years old, practicing his signature in anticipation that one day he would be asked for it. A native Southern Californian, Aikman's formative years were spent in Henryetta, Okla., where his father, a pipeline construction worker and rancher, moved the family when Troy was 12. Kenneth Aikman is the toughest man his son has ever seen, and the connection

Aikman is filthy rich but highly underpaid, his contract ranking 25th among starting QBs.

otherwise shimmering future for Aikman involves his contract, which at \$11.2 million over six years, with two years remaining, leaves him filthy rich but dramatically underpaid. His salary places him 25th among the NFL's 28 starting quarterbacks. "There are some backups who get paid more than I do," says Aikman. "But I signed the contract back in '89 and was happy with it and plan to fulfill it. I will not sit out of camp forcing anybody to renegotiate my contract. I've always felt that if you sign a contract,

STEVEN DUNN/SPORT ILLUSTRATED

then you fulfill it. In '89, I was making more money than I was worth, and in '92 I probably made less than I was worth....There's a trade-off there."

Aikman is not as diplomatic over the recent bargaining accord reached between the players and the owners, which, through the franchise-player exemption clause, essentially bounds one specially selected "franchise" player to his organization. Aikman, destined for franchise playerhood once his current contract runs out, is not exactly doing cartwheels.

"I don't know who agreed to it—Gene [Upshaw, head of the Players Association]," he says. "No one ever asked me

free agency? I mean, that's not it. It's another form of Plan B, if you ask me.

"I don't have a choice. I've got to live within the framework of what we're dealt. I don't know how it's going to affect me or what comes about. I've got two years left on my contract. What's going to happen to me? I'll deal with that when it gets to that."

In the meantime, he'll return to the field, where the ghost of former Cowboys quarterback Roger Staubach, as it always has, will still loom over every game he plays, just as it hung over each of Staubach's successors. Staubach, it so happens, is Aikman's biggest booster.

"I really feel his abilities are better than anybody's," Staubach says. "I think he's

the coming season, he will again have to produce.

"People are still talking about, boy, it's a great game, how does it feel to win the Super Bowl?" he says. "It feels great, and I don't want to take anything away from it, but everything seems bigger than it [is]. Once you've accomplished it, then it doesn't seem like it was as big a deal anymore. If you want to go out with some girl—you've been dying to go with this girl for a long time—and then you finally go out with her and you think: 'Well, it was all right anyway. She's nice, but I don't know why I was so excited about it.' Then, you're looking for someone else. I've always felt that, and that's the



"We wanted
total free agency....
Well, I thought we
got sold up the
river. That ain't total
free agency when you
start exempting
players and making
franchise players."

my opinion. No one ever asked me, 'Hey, what do you think of the exemption rule?' or 'Do you think we ought to settle with the franchise player?' No one ever asked me for my vote. Who decided it? You got one guy, or a couple of people, who are representing the players. You can assume the majority of the guys feel that way, but I don't know that anybody ever does. All I know is that our argument was that we wanted total free agency. That was our stance: We wanted total free agency. Well, I thought we got sold up the river. That ain't total free agency when you start exempting players and making franchise players, and then you got transition players, and then you got the Rooney Rule, where the top four teams can't go after guys. Where's total

Aikman and Johnson have been through it all—from their 1-15 rookie season to the Super Bowl.

LOUIS DELUCA

the best quarterback in the NFL right now.

"There's going to be fans who are going to say, 'Hey, Troy Aikman, Roger Staubach couldn't hold a candle to you,' and there's going to be some loyalty from my old fans, who'll maybe never give Troy Aikman all the credit he deserves. But those are going to be the minority....I think right now he's already got the city wrapped around his finger."

For now. But Aikman knows that as the resonance of his Super Bowl win fades into a new plate of expectations for

way I feel about the Super Bowl.

"Phil Simms still has critics. John Elway has critics. Mark Rypien, they didn't back off him last year. They're out there. They'll think of something. Since we won it in four years, I think now if we don't win another one before I retire, they'll say, 'Yeah, he won one, but he did it in his fourth year and he played another eight and he didn't do anything.'"

But the magnitude of his Super Bowl performance has left its mark. "That game is unlike any other game I've ever experienced. The rush that you go through in a Super Bowl is unparalleled. It's unlike anything I've felt. I don't know that I'll ever approach a regular-season game the same way that I have before."★

TOM DIPACE





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GREAT GAMES

1980 LOS ANGELES VS. PHILADELPHIA

LAKERS DEFEAT 76ERS FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP, AS SHOWTIME IS BORN BY JEFF RYAN

The teams we remember forever are the ones that don't just win titles but also establish a style of play that becomes a trademark. And in the 1980s, the Los Angeles Lakers lifted the glittering curtain on "Showtime."

For hoop fans craving excitement, L.A. became a purple and gold Shangri-la. There were breathtaking fast breaks and no-look passes, Jack Nicholson and the rich and famous sitting court-side at the Forum, the Laker Girls' good looks and Kareem's sky hooks. There was, well, Magic in the air. And within the course of the decade, there were five championship trophies to hold aloft in celebration.

Ask the Lakers players, and they'll tell you Showtime was born on the night of May 16, 1980, at Philadelphia's Spectrum. In Game 6 of the NBA Finals, the Lakers beat the 76ers 123-107 to win the championship. It was L.A.'s first crown in eight years, and with Magic Johnson riding to his hobbled team's rescue, the clincher unfolded in unpredictable fashion.

The Lakers brought a 3-2 lead with them into Philly, but left Kareem Abdul-Jabbar at home. The legendary center and six-time MVP was averaging 33.4 points per game for the first five games of the series, but he sprained an ankle in the third quarter of Game 5, a contest the Lakers pulled out, 108-103.

"Going back to Philadelphia without Kareem, it was supposed to be *automatic* that we were going to lose and have to play a seventh game," says former Lakers forward Jamaal Wilkes.

At least that's what the Sixers and much of the media thought. The Lakers, however, had a plan. Coach Paul Westhead figured that since he had a guy named Magic, he might as well rely on him to make the Sixers' title hopes disappear. After all, the kid had a way of making great things happen.

The 20-year-old rookie averaged 18 points during the regular season, and a year earlier, he had led Michigan State over Larry Bird's Indiana State team in the NCAA title game. Now Magic was being asked to move from guard to center, neutralize the Sixers' intimidating Darryl Dawkins, and somehow keep the



Erving and the heavily favored Sixers came up short on a Magic-al night in Philly.

game close.

It was close—60-60 at halftime—and then the Lakers surged, pulling away by 10 after three quarters and eventually winning by 16. Not wanting to match muscle with the bigger Sixers in a half-court game, the Lakers took advantage of their speed and forced an up-tempo game. Magic used his quickness to outmaneuver Philly big men Dawkins and Caldwell Jones in close, and sank the outside shot whenever traffic got congested under the boards. When the Sixers double-teamed him, Johnson calmly passed off to Wilkes, whose own hot hand could have started a five-alarm fire.

"Magic just created havoc," says Steve Mix, a Sixers forward who scored

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A large, tilted can of Sharp's beer is shown on the left, with a glass of beer pouring from it on the right. The can is red and white, with the word 'SHARP'S' in large, bold letters. The glass is filled with beer and has a thick head of foam. The background is dark and moody.

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GREAT GAMES

NBA CHAMPIONSHIP — GAME 6

PHILADELPHIA, MAY 16, 1980

LOS ANGELES

	POS.	MIN.	FGM	FGA	FTM	FTA	OFF	DEF.	TOT.	AST.	PF	STLS.	PTS.
JIM CHONES	F	43	5	9	1	1	2	8	10	3	2	3	11
JAMAAL WILKES	F	42	16	30	5	5	6	4	10	2	4	1	37
MAGIC JOHNSON	C	47	14	23	14	14	3	12	15	7	3	3	42
NORM NIXON	G	40	1	10	2	2	0	3	3	9	3	1	4
MICHAEL COOPER	G	39	4	9	8	9	3	1	4	6	4	2	16
MARK LANDSBERGER		19	2	7	1	2	3	7	10	0	4	2	5
BRAD HOLLAND		9	3	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	8
MARTY BYRNES		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals		240	45	92	33	35	17	35	52	27	22	14	123

FG PCT: .489 FT PCT: .914 TURNOVERS: CHONES 1, WILKES 3, JOHNSON 5, NIXON 2, COOPER 4, LANDSBERGER 1, HOLLAND 1 TOTAL—17 TEAM REBOUNDS: 3

PHILADELPHIA

	POS.	MIN.	FGM	FGA	FTM	FTA	OFF	DEF.	TOT.	AST.	PF	STLS.	PTS.
JULIUS ERVING	F	39	13	23	1	4	1	6	7	3	4	2	27
CALDWELL JONES	F	26	2	3	2	2	0	6	6	2	4	0	6
DARRYL DAWKINS	C	31	6	9	2	5	0	4	4	1	5	0	14
LIONEL HOLLINS	G	26	5	13	3	4	0	1	1	6	4	0	13
MAURICE CHEEKS	G	40	5	11	3	3	0	2	2	8	2	2	13
BOBBY JONES		29	4	8	0	0	4	5	9	1	4	1	8
HENRY BIBBY		21	4	10	0	2	0	3	3	3	2	1	8
STEVE MIX		25	8	11	2	2	2	2	4	2	1	0	18
JIM SPANARKEL		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
BERNARD TOONE		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
CLINT RICHARDSON		1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals		240	47	89	13	22	7	29	36	27	27	4	107

FG PCT: .528 FT PCT: .591 TURNOVERS: ERVING 3, DAWKINS 5, HOLLINS 6, CHEEKS 1, JONES, B. 1, BIBBY 1, MIX 1 TOTAL—18 TEAM REBOUNDS: 9

Blocked Shots: Johnson 1, Chones 2, Nixon 1, Dawkins 3, Jones, C. 2, Erving 2, Jones, B. 2, Cheeks 1, Mix 1. Three-pt. Field Goals: Johnson 0-1, Landsberger 0-1, Erving 0-2, Hollins 0-1, Bibby 0-2, Richardson 0-1. Officials: Jack Madden and Joe Gushue.

Attendance: 18,276.

SCORE BY PERIODS:	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	TOTALS
LOS ANGELES	32	28	33	30	123
PHILADELPHIA	29	31	23	24	107

18 points that game. "We didn't have an answer for him defensively. You could see the guy was a much better ballplayer under pressure. Everybody on our team looked at him and said, 'Whoa!'"

It is the game Johnson has called the greatest of his career, but in the years that have followed, Magic's performance has overshadowed the efforts of other heroes. Forgotten was Wilkes' 37 points, Mark Landsberger's 10 rebounds off the bench, and the surprise effort of Michael Cooper. Though he had averaged just nine points per game during the season, Cooper filled in for Johnson at point guard with 16 points and six assists.

"Everything was fun for me in that game," Cooper says. "Even guarding Julius Erving. That game really helped my confidence. It showed people I could play big-time, crucial basketball."

"Our players felt a lot of us would have to have the game of our lives to win," says Wilkes. "We knew Kareem wanted us to do it, so that challenge gave us an emotional high."

When the victorious Lakers returned to LAX, there to greet them at the terminal was Abdul-Jabbar, a 10-gallon hat on his head and a big smile stretching across his face. Unfortunately, not everyone was smiling that night, particularly hoop junkies

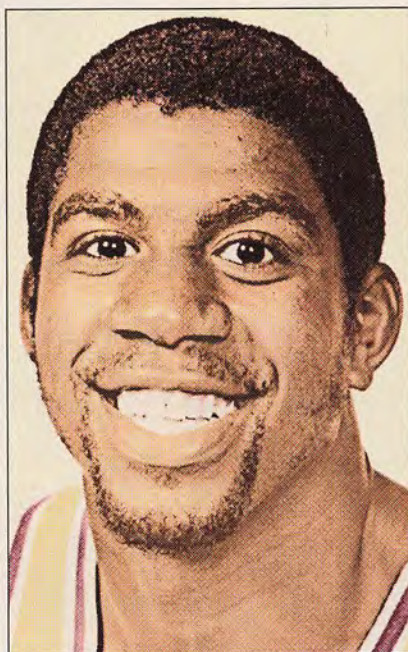
across the nation. Don't forget, Magic and Bird hadn't yet sparked the NBA's popularity boom, so CBS decided to air the game on tape-delay to most of the country, starting it as late as 11:30 p.m. on the East Coast. Still, not even that could diminish the game's significance, and its legacy would prove to be an important one.

"The Lakers became Magic's team from that point on," says Mix. "Before that game," adds Wilkes, "it was Kareem's team."

With Johnson choreographing Showtime, the Lakers took off running and didn't stop until they had reached greatness. "We put a patent on our style," says Cooper. "We didn't just run and gun, we ran and shot well. Lots of teams ran fast breaks off missed shots. We ran off the other team's misses and makes."

And looked dazzling doing it. How fitting that in Philadelphia, the city Ben Franklin made famous, the Lakers helped the NBA discover a new form of electricity. ★

Jeff Ryan is a New York-based free-lance writer.



Magic calls it the best game of his career: a 42-point, 15-rebound effort that carried the Lakers to the 1980 NBA title.

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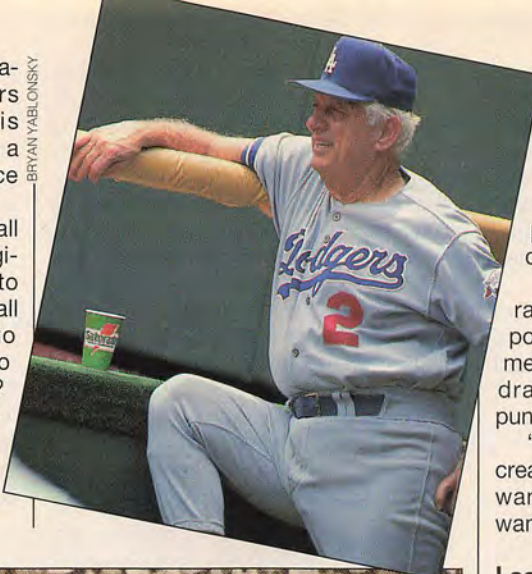


1980 LOS ANGELES VS. PHILADELPHIA

Weeks before the 1968 baseball amateur draft, Los Angeles Dodgers scouting director Al Campanis called Al LoCasale, who was then a Cincinnati Bengals executive, for advice on how to select players.

Why would a knowledgeable baseball man such as Campanis—a guy who originally signed Sandy Koufax and Roberto Clemente, among others—seek baseball advice from a person whose claim to fame is being an executive assistant to Los Angeles Raiders owner Al Davis? Because the baseball draft was in its infancy, and LoCasale, who became the San Diego Chargers' director of player personnel in 1961, had experience in selecting quality players.

BRYAN YABLONSKY



"We spent a lot of time talking about organization and preparing paperwork," says LoCasale, on his talk with Campanis. "How do you evaluate your evaluators? You have to know what weight to assign various people, how to break personnel down."

Campanis and his evaluators then rated the prospects and added bonus points for such intangibles as desire and mental toughness. They also decided to draft mostly hitters due to the lack of punch at the big-league level.

"We told our scouts to look for the cream," Campanis says today. "We didn't want just a major-league prospect. We wanted a Dodger prospect. They learned

Lasorda once had talent such as Joe Ferguson (left) and Doyle Alexander (below) at his disposal. No longer.

SPORT ARCHIVE



L.A. DODGERS



DRAFT

THE 1968 BASEBALL DRAFT HELPED
THE LOS ANGELES DODGERS
BECOME PENNANT CONTENDERS.
TODAY, THEY STRUGGLE TO FIND
THE MAGIC TOUCH AND RE-IGNITE
THE WINNING HERITAGE

BY MARK LANGILL

Dodgers®

to look for the very best."

So on June 6 and 7, 1968, the Dodgers pulled off the greatest haul in baseball-draft history, selecting Bobby Valentine, Bill Buckner, Tom Paciorek, Joe Ferguson, Doyle Alexander, Steve Garvey and Ron Cey. All made significant contributions, playing a combined 10,527 games in the big leagues.

According to Campanis, those players helped the Dodgers remain contenders for 15 years, from 1969 through 1983, and the proof is in the standings. During that period, they won five division titles, four pennants and one championship.

But the 1993 Los Angeles Dodgers are desperate to rekindle that magic from the old school. Last year, they carried a \$43 million payroll and finished last for the first time since 1905.

Their pitiful play and the four home games they lost due to the Los Angeles riots caused home attendance to drop 26 percent. The club then purged eight minor-league instructors and cut corners to the extent of writing 'L.A.' on its baseballs so they wouldn't get lost or mixed up with the opponents' balls.

Fred Claire, who was credited for building the 1988 championship team, is now being blamed for the club's demise. His stop-gap maneuvers, critics says, prohibit lasting chemistry, in part because of salary arbitration and free agency. It hasn't helped that No. 1 picks have bombed. Since 1982, in fact, Franklin Stubbs, Chris Gwynn and Tom Goodwin are the club's only top picks to reach the majors. Fortunately, overachieving prospects such as Eric Karros and Mike Piazza have saved face.

The Dodgers never developed a left-handed closer to replace Steve Howe after he was cut loose for drug problems, and it's not as if they didn't have a successor in the minors. Farmhands John Franco and Sid Fernandez were each traded for a song.

Rather than keeping his top prospects, Claire acquired rehabilitation projects (Kal Daniels, John Tudor, Todd Worrell), big names past their primes (Jesse Orosco, Juan Samuel, Gary Carter), and boyhood friends (Darryl Strawberry and Eric Davis).

"Right now, it's difficult to have an identity for this team," says former Dodgers first baseman Wes Parker. "How can players from Cincinnati and Oakland teach players from New York and Montreal how to be a Dodger?"

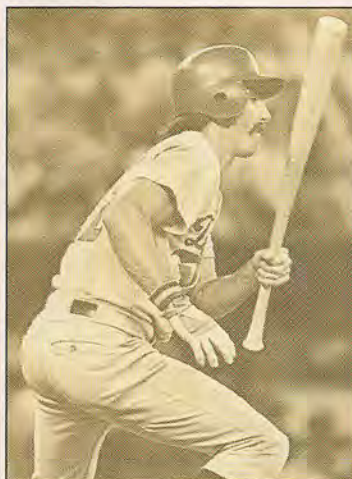
Assuming this is manager Tommy Lasorda's swan song, only Orel Hershiser and Mike Sharperson will remain to tell stories about the '88 championship. And memories are about all this organization has. There were so many question marks on this team at the start of the '93 season that some felt another last-place finish wasn't out of the question, despite the ad-

dition of the expansion Colorado Rockies.

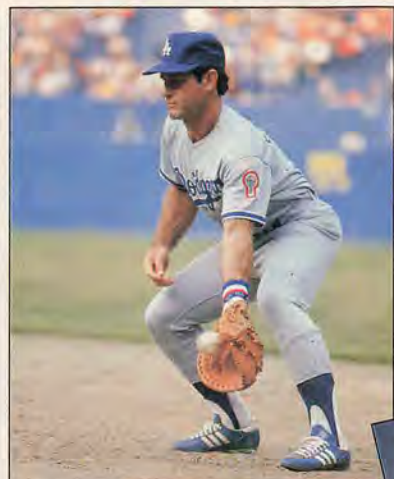
The Dodgers reluctantly admit to "an interruption of talent" on the farm during the 1980s. There are bright spots today but not enough to keep Claire from plugging holes via expensive veterans. Last winter, he chased free agent Wade Boggs but settled on Tim Wallach at third base. Jody Reed took over at second after prospect Eric Young, unimpressive and unprotected, was drafted by the Rockies.

"I would say the train is on track, but it's not at the station yet," says Dodgers farm director Charlie Blaney. "It's too early in the game to have hindsight of how well we're doing. We've got prospects like Pedro Astacio, Pedro Martinez, Henry Ro-

Buckner (left) and Garvey were among the Dodgers' '68 draft, which ranks as the best ever.



SPORT ARCHIVE



PAUL JASINSKI

driguez, Billy Ashley, Raul Mondesi and Mike Piazza. Hopefully, five years from now we can look back and say the system worked. Right now, we're in the third inning of the game."

DRAFT

Dodgers

Tommy Lasorda can remember a time when he had talent at his disposal, having managed the class of '68 from rookie ball until it wore out its welcome in Tinseltown.

"We knew there was quite a bit of talent," says Garvey, who would set a National League record for consecutive games played. "By Triple-A you could tell because of the collective play under Tom Lasorda, who instilled values and molded the talent."

The Dodgers put Cey at the hot corner, switching Garvey from third base to first. Together, they formed half of an infield that played together for 8½ years.

"I don't think another team will get that much talent out of one draft again," says Blaney. "I would love to be sitting here having just won the World Series with 25 Dodger prospects. Unfortunately, that's not going to happen in the real world."

At least, not with the Dodgers. It's been 16 years since they had a No. 1 draft pick that panned out. And that was a

sore-armed pitcher named Bob Welch.

Recent No. 1 picks Dan Opperman (1987), Kiki Jones (1989) and Ronnie Walden (1990), all pitchers, have yet to fully recover from arm injuries. It gets worse. In 1983, the Dodgers chose Wichita State left-hander Erik Sonberg with the 18th pick overall—no big deal until you realize the Boston Red Sox used No. 19 on Roger Clemens.

Five years later, they blew another first-rounder on Bill Bene, a wild flame-thrower from Cal State Los Angeles, whom the Dodgers figured they could teach control. A year later, a department-store mannequin had to be placed in the batter's box during practice because

Bene's teammates were afraid to face his erratic pitching. The story isn't so humorous to Dodgers officials, who bypassed Jim Abbott and Robin Ventura to get Bene.

"There's no question we've had some major disappointments, but I don't like anyone pointing fingers," Claire says. "Injuries and bad luck have been a factor. Overall, I have tremendous respect for the scouts and the player-development people."

Last summer, the Dodgers spent their first-round pick on catcher Ryan Luzinski. The early returns on Luzinski weren't overwhelming. He failed to make *Baseball America's* Top-10 list in the Pioneer League, having been beaten out by his backup, Felix Rodriguez.

Critics point out that Claire, Blaney

and scouting director Terry Reynolds never played major-league baseball. Claire was a sportswriter before joining the Dodgers' publicity department in 1969. Blaney and Reynolds used to operate the Dodgertown complex in Vero Beach, Fla.

But Dodgers loyalists quickly point out that Claire's inner circle includes scouts Phil Regan, Jerry Stephenson, Mel Didier and Gary Sutherland, and that Blaney's coaching staff in 1992 had a combined 284 years of major-league experience.

"I don't know of too many players who can walk off the field and become good businessmen," says former Dodgers outfielder Reggie Smith, now the team's minor-league coordinator. "Today's game

league system is a point the Dodgers have stressed. Reggie Smith's disciplined clubhouse attitude as a player carried over into his coaching duties. He prevents his upstarts, for example, from wearing Oakley sunglasses, low-cut pants and high-top spikes.

"If you look like a clown, you're apt to play that way," he says, without mentioning names. "When I see players hung up more on cosmetics than actual playing and execution, there's something wrong. I don't understand why today's players have to make a fashion statement."

What also bothers Smith, who rejoined the organization in 1989 as a roving hitting instructor, is that many of his players

THE LoCASALE/ CAMPANIS CONNECTION

While it may seem strange that Campanis would seek LoCasale's advice on how to draft baseball players, it's not all that surprising considering their relationship, which dates back to the 1950s. Campanis wrote magazine articles on coaching that fascinated LoCasale; they finally met at a coaching clinic, and LoCasale has considered Campanis his mentor ever since. So it's not surprising, then, that the pupil helped the teacher a decade later.

"Everybody has to be on the same page," LoCasale told Campanis in '68. "Use the same vocabulary to establish what is 'excellent speed' and what is 'good speed.'"

Campanis absorbed that advice and used his No. 1 pick to draft Valentine—over Buckner—because of his natural ability at the plate and in the infield. The Dodgers wound up getting Buckner anyway—in the second round—acquired Paciorek and Ferguson in later rounds, and nabbed Garvey and Cey in the secondary phase.

LoCasale, now an executive assistant for the Raiders, believes that another draft such as the one in '68 could put the Dodgers back into contention, but he also warns that from a scout's viewpoint, a keen eye for amateur talent doesn't guarantee success at the big-league level.

"It's one way to build, but it's not the only way," he says. "Al Davis says the draft is overrated because of free agency in the NFL. Al's principle thought is, 'It isn't who you took, it's what you do with them.' You have to be able to project people five years down the road."

The Dodgers have come up empty with most of their recent first-round picks, and LoCasale can only speculate on the problem:

"Sometimes, running on emotion and adrenaline gives you a false reading on what the kid is really like," he says. "They can't keep that level for every game. See a high school pitcher who's wild and can't find home plate. What you might not realize is that the night before, his girlfriend gave him his ring back and told him to get lost."

"Scouting is an inexact science, but it's an area where, if you organize and use your mind, you can beat people by doing a better job. That's fun."

Maybe the Dodgers should seek LoCasale's advice for this month's draft.



Drafting Karros (bottom left) saved face for the Dodgers, who once routinely landed top talents such as Cey (top left) and Valentine.

deals with big money, and you have to have a good marriage of administrators and business people."

Says Claire: "My basic philosophy is to give the scouting department total freedom, with one mandate: I want them to draft the player who has the best chance of reaching the majors."

Garvey winces at the Dodgers' roster today. He recalls the days of the early '70s when fans in Los Angeles watched prospects work off the rough edges and blossom over several seasons.

"I'm a firm believer [that] you need half or two-thirds players from your farm system on the roster," Garvey says. "You can easily get a team of superstars who can't win together."

Restoring pride within their minor-

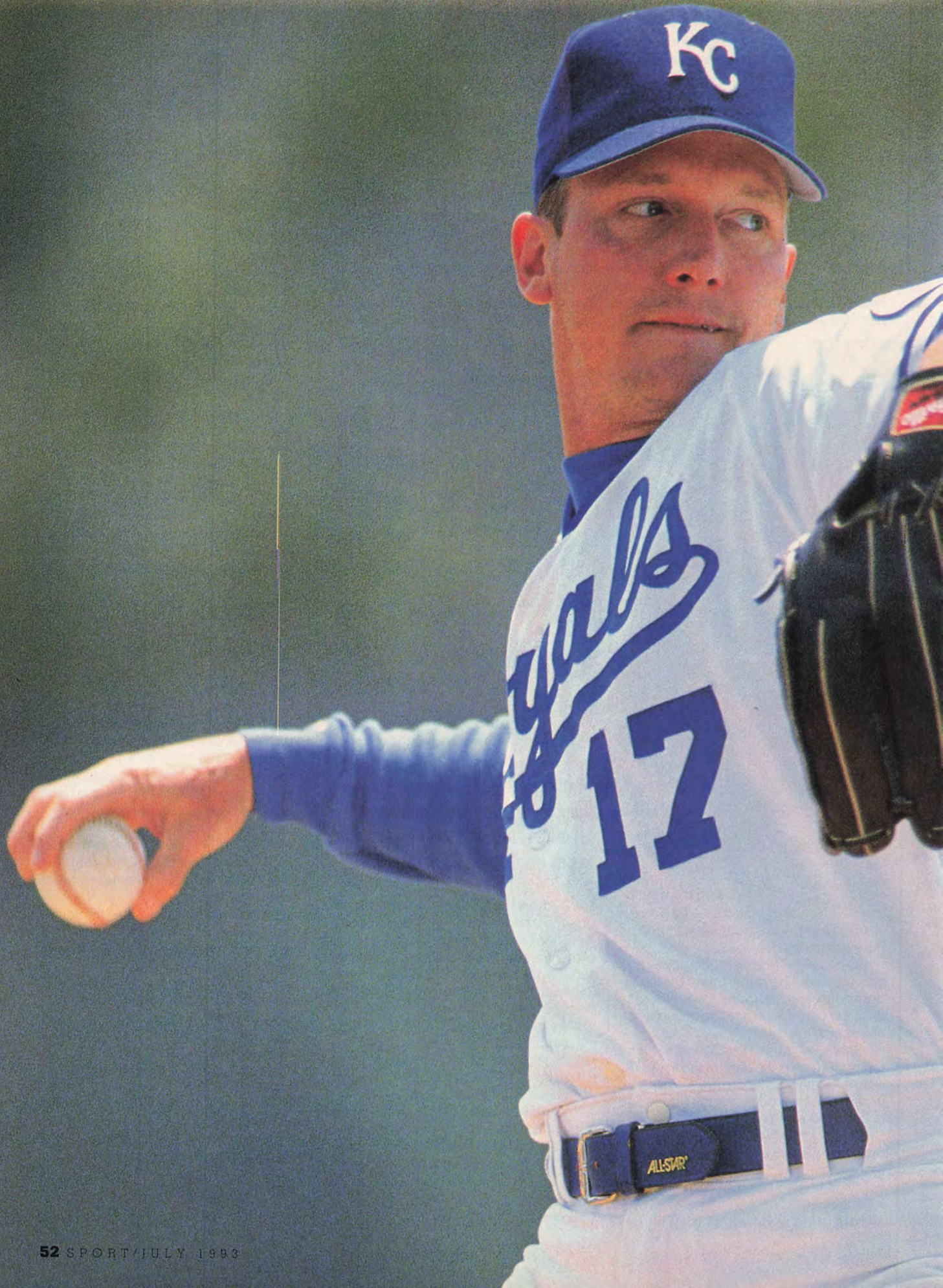
didn't know the Dodgers' history. Smith says most had no idea he was a ballplayer.

"There were black players who didn't know who Roy Campanella was, and that hurt me," Smith says. "They knew Jackie Robinson but thought he played for the San Francisco Giants. That's what bothers me."

"We have to get that pride back. A lot of players probably are going to think I'm a jerk, but they don't realize everyone loves to beat up the Dodgers. Lately, [teams have] been able to do just that."

"You can't put a Dodger uniform on a person from another team and call him a Dodger," says Parker. "It's a tragic mistake, and now they're paying the price."★

Mark Langill covers the Dodgers for the Pasadena-Star News.





DAVID CONE

THE MILLIONAIRE PITCHER IS BACK
HOME IN KANSAS CITY, BUT HIS HEART
IS NOT FAR FROM NEW YORK



Last December, David Cone signed a three-year deal with the Kansas City Royals worth \$18 million, ending one of baseball's more dramatic free-agent courtships. As always, Cone went out with a flair; he asked for, and received, \$9 million up front.

Cone is honest, independent, and one of the last true rebels of a New York Mets team that dominated the National League during the late 1980s. In fact, Cone half-believes that the reason the Mets traded him to the Toronto Blue

Jays last August was because he was too outspoken for the conservative front office. It also didn't help that he was on the periphery of a spring-training rape investigation and was later named by three women in a lawsuit charging indecent exposure in the bullpen.

But as unconventionally as Cone has lived his life, he remains one of baseball's most talented pitchers. He throws a 90-mph fastball, a slider, a curveball and a split-fingered fastball, and to hear former teammate Ron Darling tell it, "Dave could probably win 15 games a year with just two of those pitches."

Now returning to Kansas City, Mo.—his hometown—Cone says he plans to step into a time tunnel, back to an era when he was just a quiet guy with a great heater. The Royals hold their breath, hoping Cone holds true to his word.

TOM PRACE

BY BOB KLAPISCH

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TOM DIPACE



The Royals won the off-season free-agent bidding war for Cone, who signed for \$18 million.

SPORT: For that one moment when the Royals paid you \$9 million up front, did you actually have a check for that amount in your hand?

CONE: No, we actually completed the deal with a wire transfer, with the taxes

Royals having a big ballpark, a pitcher's park, and with great defense, they were very attractive to me, especially coming from the Mets. Plus, Hal McRae is an old-school manager just like Davey Johnson. You know, take care of No. 1, keep your own house in order.

SPORT: Did it factor into your thinking at all that the Royals haven't been in a pennant race in six of the last seven years?

CONE: Yeah, that factored into it, but we've also got a whole new team. We've added three players with playoff and World Series experience. That was a big factor.

SPORT: Given your emotional ties to New York, how close did the Yankees come to signing you?

CONE: They made Greg Maddux their No. 1 priority. The Royals made me their No. 1 priority. That meant a lot. The Yankees started the negotiations by offering five different free-agent pitchers contracts and basically telling the agents that the first two to take it, it'll be first come, first served. That didn't make me feel real good.

SPORT: Did you get the sense who was calling the shots for the Yankees during the off-season?

CONE: It was very confusing. First, we dealt with Gene Michael, then with Joe Molloy. We requested permission to talk to George Steinbrenner and couldn't get it, so it got confusing. I don't mean to knock any of those other guys, but there was certainly a question of who I was

"They say the more low-key you are, the better chance you have of sticking around in baseball. It's never been my intention to stay around long or to be low-key. I'd rather burn out than fade away."

already taken out, right into my bank account. But you do start to think about those transfers, like, did I really get that money? Who's on the other end of the wire, Michael Milken?

SPORT: But money aside, why would you want to leave a World Championship team like the Blue Jays?

CONE: I felt in the long run I could relax in Kansas City and fulfill my potential. I like the atmosphere there, and with the

dealing with.

SPORT: If the Yankees had handled the negotiations better, could you have envisioned yourself as a Yankee?

CONE: Initially, I didn't really realize Kansas City was a viable opportunity. I didn't know which direction they were going in. I knew the Yankees were [an option]. If the Yankees had come hard and fast at me for five years with Maddux-type numbers, it certainly would've

turned my head. But apparently they didn't feel I was in his category. He was younger and he was the guy they wanted, so I backed off and let them go for him. If I really wanted to play hardball I would've waited for Maddux to make a move, countered him, then gone to the Yankees and said, "How do you like me now?" But I was more concerned with getting a straight-up negotiation done and a quick decision. I was actually criticized for that. People wondered why I didn't wait until after Maddux signed with Atlanta; that would've made me more valuable to the Yankees. Probably so, and I probably could've gotten much more money if I had waited. Honestly, [Royals owner] Ewing Kaufman's direct, straightforward approach is what really sold me.

SPORT: You're going back to a completely different environment than New York's. Will you miss it? Or are there elements of the city you'll be glad to be away from?

CONE: Both. I'll miss the chance at a Subway Series, which is why I'm a proponent of the three-division [realignment] with wild-card playoffs—a revision of the entire system. Maybe add two more teams, Tampa and Phoenix, and expand to three divisions in each league and get the extra layer of playoffs. I'm a definite proponent of that—and even some interleague play. There's got to be some way to tap into the Yankees and the Mets rivalry, the Cardinals and the Royals, the Dodgers and the Angels. That's the part I'll miss, being on a winning team in New York, even if a Subway Series is remotely possible.

SPORT: Players have said there's no experience like winning in New York. Is that true?

CONE: Absolutely. There's such a tradition of winning there. Baseball fans have had more experience than some of the other cities. It's a more evolved [group of] baseball fans, and they're tougher. That's why. Because they're more intelligent.

SPORT: In what ways are you glad to be out of New York?

CONE: It's sort of nice to be able to relax in K.C. and not be under the microscope. I'm hoping that an easier lifestyle will help me reach my potential.

SPORT: But you thrived in New York. Why?

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CONE: It's all about being honest, an ability to laugh at yourself and not take yourself too seriously. Make a mistake, stand up, admit it and then move on. Otherwise, it's going to dog you forever. Case in point was the Atlanta game [in 1990, in which Cone argued with an umpire at first base while two base runners scored]: I went from the all-time blooper, standing in front of my locker, owning up to what I did, and after that I went on an eight- or nine-game winning streak. The incident was all forgotten. If I had ducked in a cab that night and lost a few more games, I would've been buried in New York.

SPORT: Do you have a specific memory as a Met that you'll keep closer than any other?

CONE: What sticks in my mind is sitting in the trainer's room, crying with Darryl Strawberry after the loss to the Dodgers [in Game 7 of the 1988 NLCS]. Bobby Ojeda was right there with us. He looked right at me and said, 'I know what you're thinking; don't think it. Keep your head up.' He could read my mind, it seemed, just by looking into my eyes.

SPORT: Obviously, you knew what he was talking about. It was the column you wrote after Game 1 ripping the Dodgers in the *New York Daily News*, true?

CONE: Yeah, the whole controversy around Game 2, the way we lost it.

SPORT: But you came back and won Game 6. If it weren't for you, there wouldn't have been a Game 7.

CONE: That's true, and that's what Bobby was telling me, that I was the reason we were even there. I made a mistake and came back strong.

SPORT: It's odd that for all your suc-



Cone says he can fulfill his pitching potential in the quiet confines of Kansas City.

pennant races in September. There were so many Met fans who would tell me thank you just for playing important games in September. There's a lot to that, competing every year instead of being a yo-yo. But the truth is, we didn't win as we should have. That '88 team was the best [Mets] team ever, or at least *one* of the best, and somehow we lost. That's what happens when you run into a hot pitcher like Orel Hershisser, throwing up zeros. It's sort of what happens to the winning team in the College World Series. One guy can take you all the way.

SPORT: Why didn't the Mets want you

SPORT: If that's so, why didn't the Mets make an attempt? Was it personal?

CONE: It's a combination of things. Some of the adversity was disconcerting to them, I'm sure. There's such an adversarial relationship in general between the players and the owners—not just in New York but throughout the system. When I went 20-3 [in 1988], the next year they threatened to renew me for a \$200,000 raise. That was the year the organization claimed it'd made a profit of \$58 million. Now, here's a guy who won 20 games, and he's being offered a \$200,000 raise. By general standards that's a lot of money, but in the system, that falls far short. From that point on I knew it was going to be a battle with the Mets. It's a cold business, and you've got to treat it as such.

SPORT: Would it have been any easier for you if you'd been a quieter guy, someone who stayed out of the headlines?

CONE: They say the more low-key you are, the better chance you have of sticking around in baseball. It's never been my intention to stay around long or to be low-key. I'd rather burn out than fade away.

SPORT: Do you buy into the conspiracy theory—the one that says the Mets have systematically weeded out their rebels, with you being the most recent example?

CONE: I think the most difficult decision the Mets made was Keith Hernandez. He was the leader. When they let him go, it was a definite message that was sent that change was on the way. You can go back to Lenny Dykstra and Mookie Wilson and see that [trading both] were just errors, grotesque errors in judgment. All the maneuvering in the lineup just to get an offensive bat [Gregg

"My reckless-lifestyle days are over, that's for sure. I can't allow myself to be put in a situation where I can be taken advantage of. I'm much more guarded in who I meet, who I talk to."

cesses as a Met, your strongest memory is a painful one. Would you say that in your five-plus years in New York, your experience was a positive one?

CONE: It was a positive one because up until the end we competed. Even though we fell short in '87 and '89, and '90 and even '91, we competed. We were in

back?

CONE: My agent [Steve Fehr] went up to [Mets GM] Al Harazin during the winter meetings and said, "I heard you're looking for a No. 5 starter. I've got a No. 1." Harazin just laughed it off. The possibility was there; we were ready to listen.

Jefferies] in the lineup was also an error in judgment.

The real kingpin was Mex [Hernandez]. When they decided to let Mex go, that was the beginning of the end for the Mets, as far as the clubhouse atmosphere, the gamers, the guys that get themselves ready to play any way they can.

SPORT: In your mind, was that a decision based on the kind of person Hernandez was, the kind of influence he seemed to carry in the clubhouse?

CONE: The message was that the era of the arrogant Mets had come to an end. Mex used to walk around drinking coffee, wired, smoking Marlboro Lights, talking baseball. He was ready to play, and he got you ready to play too. That was Mex's key; he was into the game mentally more than anyone I've ever seen.

SPORT: How about your own persona. You've been in what seemed like an endless blur of scandals. There was even a story in Penthouse last year about the spring-training investigation. Has all this changed you?

CONE: My reckless-lifestyle days are over, that's for sure. I can't allow myself to be put in a situation where I can be taken advantage of. I'm much more guarded in who I meet, who I talk to.

SPORT: Do you even talk to strangers anymore?

CONE: I walk with my head down a lot. I do avoid confrontations at all costs. It's like you're walking on glass. Everywhere I go in public I'm careful. I feel like I'm always being watched.

SPORT: Will you ever escape that during your career, or will that peace come only after retirement?

CONE: It'll fade, certainly, coming to Kansas City. There's only one major newspaper. Some days we don't have any press in the clubhouse. It's a complete reversal. It's kind of nice at this point because I've been through so much crap. It's kind of nice to back off, relax and have fun again playing baseball.

SPORT: But in regard to the lawsuit brought against you by three New York women—the one charging indecent exposure—how much of those problems were brought on by yourself, and how much would you say was just a case of you being victimized?

CONE: Certainly a lot of it's not fair, but that's not the question. The real issue is understanding the system—the business of competition between the media in New York. The key is knowing about it and dealing with it in a straightforward way, not taking yourself too seriously—not worrying about every little thing that's written about you. Trying to

control the media is out of the question. Maybe Bobby Bonilla and Jeff Torborg will figure it out this year. They've got to roll with the punches.

SPORT: In what direction do you think the Mets are going?

CONE: I think the keys are Ryan Thompson and Jeff Kent. Thompson is their first natural center fielder since Dykstra and Wilson, and when was that, 1989? That's too long of a span between natural center fielders. If he can do the job, that'll solidify the middle. Tony Fernandez is a great addition. If Kent can be a Bobby Grich-type second baseman, he'll be a big plus.

SPORT: Are the Mets good enough to win?

CONE: I think the National League East is up for grabs. I like Philadelphia in that division. I know that's the atmosphere Danny Jackson will thrive in. The Phillies have a bunch of gamers—Dykstra, Daulton—that won't allow Jackson to fail. The Expos are a little thin at the end of their rotation. They lost Gardner and that'll hurt. We've got him now.

SPORT: Jeff Torborg has a very dis-

tinct, hands-on approach to managing, different than Davey Johnson. Do these Mets have the right chemistry to win?

CONE: That remains to be seen. But I'll be pulling for them—John Franco, Doc Gooden, all of them, I'd like to see them win. My friendships with the guys in the clubhouse supersedes any animosity toward the front office.

SPORT: The Mets front office will be watching you closely this year, true?

CONE: Everyone will. The Phillies will, the Braves...every club I negotiated with.

SPORT: So is there pressure on you?


CONE: There's always the need to justify yourself, not only the contract but the decision I made, whether it was the right place for me to go. It's not just money. The money was everywhere. I had my choice of where I wanted to go, and the contracts were all pretty much equal. I really thought Kansas City was the best place for me for the next three years. We'll see if I was right. ★

Bob Klapisch is a baseball columnist for the *New York Daily News*.



As a member of the Mets, Cone made headlines on and off the field, but now says his reckless-lifestyle days are over.



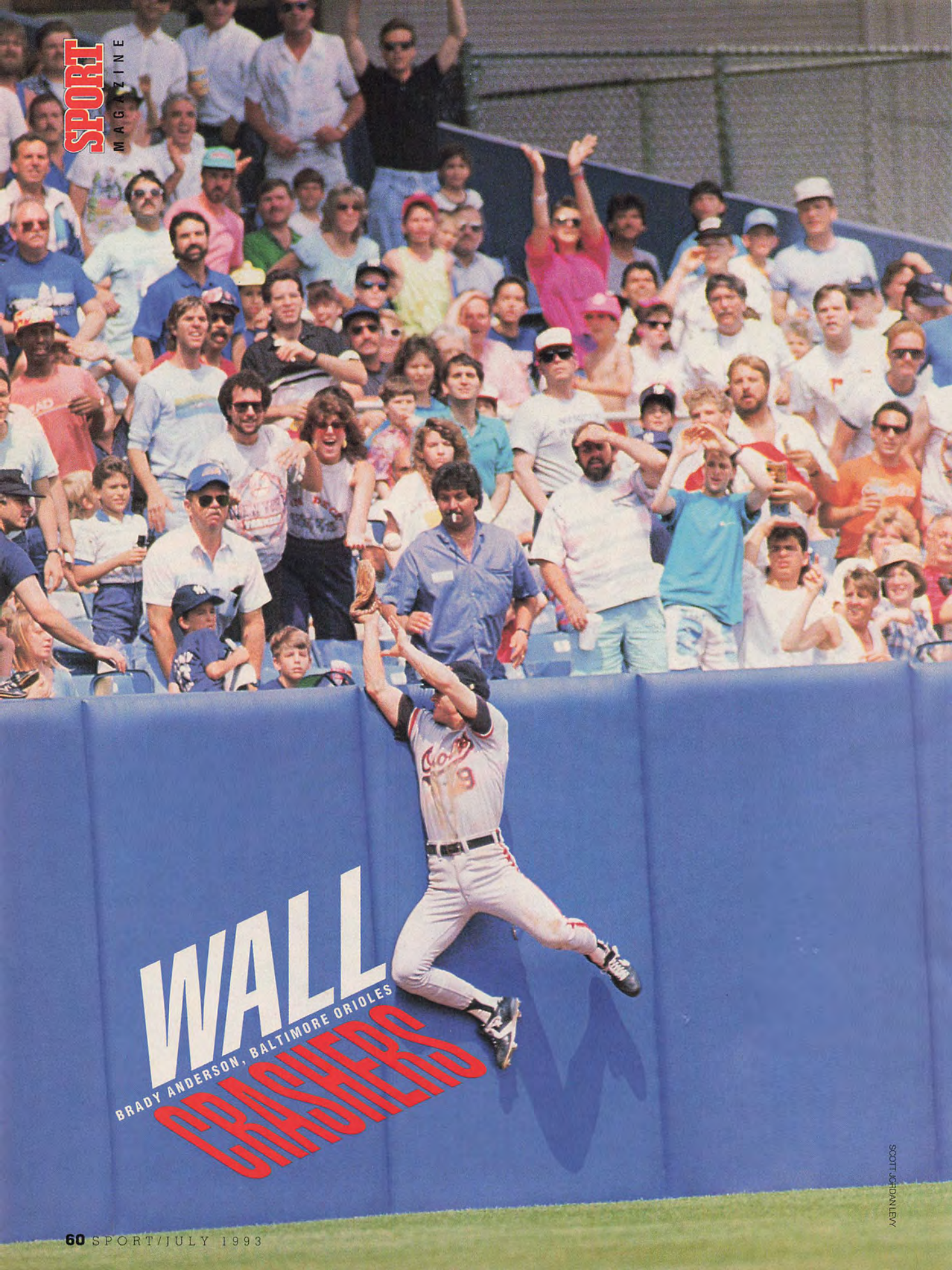


WALL

ORLANDO MERCED PITTSBURGH PIRATES

CRASHERS

KIRK SCHLEA



WALL CRASHERS

BRADY ANDERSON, BALTIMORE ORIOLES

SCOTT JORDAN LEVY

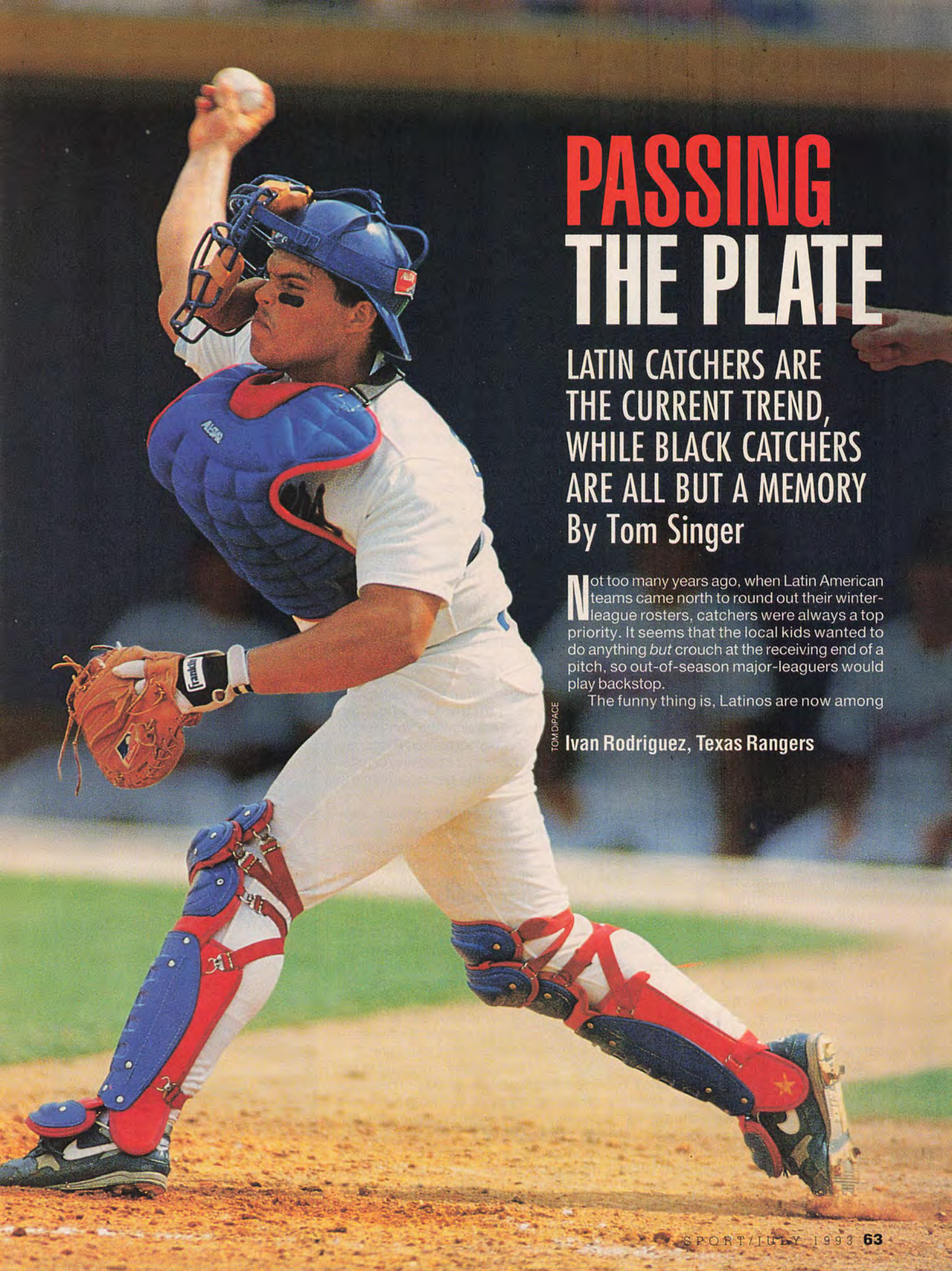
WALL CRASHERS

PAT BORDERS, TORONTO BLUE JAYS

PETER TRAWERS



SCOTT GUNNINGHAM



PASSING THE PLATE

LATIN CATCHERS ARE
THE CURRENT TREND,
WHILE BLACK CATCHERS
ARE ALL BUT A MEMORY
By Tom Singer

Not too many years ago, when Latin American teams came north to round out their winter-league rosters, catchers were always a top priority. It seems that the local kids wanted to do anything *but* crouch at the receiving end of a pitch, so out-of-season major-leaguers would play backstop.

The funny thing is, Latinos are now among

TOM DIPACE

Ivan Rodriguez, Texas Rangers



Boston's Tony Pena heads the current list of Latin catchers in longevity, with 13 years of major-league experience.

the best catchers in baseball, and while they don't yet dominate in numbers—four are among the 28 major-league starters this season—they're tops in quality. Texas' Ivan Rodriguez and Cleveland's Sandy Alomar Jr. are two young sensations on a scene shared by perennial All-Stars Tony Pena and Benito Santiago. Carlos Hernandez (Los Angeles), Carlos Delgado (Toronto), Javier Lopez (Atlanta) and Raul Santana (Montreal) wait just on the other side of the door.

From virtual zilch a couple of commissions ago, it's a startling trend, and one that parallels another, equally stunning: the vanishing black catcher. The 101 catchers on the 40-man rosters taken by clubs into spring training included only one African-American, the Twins' less-than-stellar Lenny Webster.

What's going on? Certainly not a conscious agenda. When presented with the facts, various executives, scouts and former catchers were bluntly astounded by both sets of numbers.

The reaction from Whitey Herzog, the California Angels' vice president for player personnel, is typical. Within a few informative minutes spent discussing the

Latin-catcher influx, Herzog goes from scoffing ("Naw, I don't think Latinos are more dominant than they've ever been") to double-taking. "By God, you're right," he finally exclaims. "I guess I never thought about this, but you raise a great point."

The absence of black catchers in big-league camps was "a shocking statistic" to Angels scouting director Bob Fontaine Jr. And Dodgers scout Jerry Stephenson speculated that perhaps "the black athletes who years ago would be catching in the majors now are linebackers in the NFL."

These two trends are unquestionably related, but only as undercurrents of a broader tide. The art of receiving in the U.S. is catching hell. Mothers of any color don't want their sons growing up to be catchers.

"Where you been?" challenges Buck Rodgers, the former catcher and current Angels manager. "I had this theory five years ago: Little League is driving catchers out of the game; parents don't want their kids to catch. Blacks play Little League, too, don't they? They're Americans. First thing any coach hears is, 'Johnny can play as long as he doesn't catch.' Latinos just go out and play. They don't have mothers and fathers making up their minds when they're 10 years old."

According to some, Latin youngsters are swayed by instructors who often have ties to the majors. And don't forget headlines. The Santiagos and Penas are their newest heroes, and playing catcher is seen as one of the best roads to the show.

"All kids want to imitate the big players of their era," says Ralph Avila, the Dodgers' chief prospector in the Dominican Republic. "From Luis Aparicio to Ozzie Guillen, every Latin wanted to be a shortstop. Now it's the catchers. It's a tough position, and there's a lot of things you have to know, but I try to convince kids that if they have the tools, it's the easiest way to reach the majors."

"Those kids aren't afraid to get behind the plate, and they have the athletic ability to convert from a different position," says Preston Gomez, the Angels' ambassador to Latin America. "Go to a tryout there, and you'd be amazed how many teens are catching. Other places, the good athletes don't want to get behind the plate. These kids know

it's the quickest route to the big leagues and, if they have a bat, they can make a lot of money."

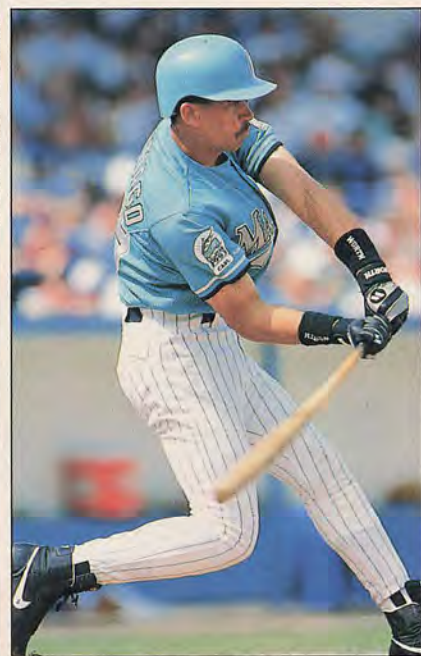
Look at the stats: In 1992, the 26 major-league starting catchers hit .249, with 10 home runs and 44 RBI. This might explain why baseball had such a tough time getting rid of Bob Boone and Gary Carter, still can't rid of Carlton Fisk and Steve Lake, and has allowed Ron Karkovice and Joel Skinner to amass nice pensions. As the caliber of catching goes south, so, too, does the hunt for new catchers.

Beyond the current modest Latin representation on the big-league catching scene (11 in box scores in '92, a dozen in '93 camps), the future-portending numbers are astonishing. Last season's minor-league ranks included approximately 150 Latin catchers, more than a hundred of them in Class A ball, right on schedule for fulfilling Rodgers' prediction that "in another five years, 60 percent of the catchers in the majors will be Latinos."

Our national programs certainly don't meet the demand. Last June's amateur draft, affecting only U.S. high school graduates and college players, included 129 catchers among 1,400 selections, or only 9.2 percent of the prospect pool. At that, most were late-round picks we'll never hear from again, the most obvious exceptions being No. 1 choices Charles

"Black athletes who years ago would be catching in the majors now are...in the NFL."

"Latinos are doing the best job of instruction in the baseball world."



A former NL Rookie of the Year, Benito Santiago is catching for the expansion Florida Marlins.



Having matured as a player, Sandy Alomar Jr. is now a top-notch catcher in Cleveland.

Johnson (Florida), Ryan Luzinski (L.A.) and Jason Kendall (Pittsburgh).

Johnson also happens to be black. And if the University of Miami product realizes his star potential, he will become the first African-American to catch regularly in the majors in more than two decades; Earl Williams ended the line with the '72 Atlanta Braves.

Until 25 years ago, blacks were quite prominent as catchers, with Roy Campanella, Elston Howard and Earl Battey hogging All-Star berths as the '50s dissolved into the '60s. But there has not been a black All-Star catcher since John Roseboro in 1969, the season before he shut down his 14-year career with the Washington Senators.

"I don't know if it's a racial thing or not, with all the stereotyping that still goes on—'Catchers and quarterbacks can't be black,' that type of thing," says Roseboro, who last winter quit as a roving catching instructor for the Dodgers and is now in private business in Los Angeles. But he acknowledges an ebb in the flow of talent into baseball, particularly from urban minority neighborhoods: "Baseball just isn't as widely played as it used to be, and more of the talent that exists seems to go to football or basketball."

"Latin America is today what the inner city was 15 years ago, before programs dried up and gangs overtook the play-

grounds," says Darrell Miller, who has unique insights into the issue on several levels. He was one of the majors' last black catchers, spending five utility seasons with the Angels through 1988. Today, he is director of the club's community-relations efforts, a role which often takes him into the core of that inner city.

"We're again making baseball a priority for our black athletes," Miller says. "Latin America became a source for catchers because they cultivated them. But baseball realizes home is the most important place, and we're taking back the inner city. Through programs such as RBI (Reviving Baseball's Inner-city), I guarantee that in the next three-to-five years you'll see an influx of solid black catchers."

But will they remain catchers? The front office seems compelled to steer blacks into other positions, primarily the outfield; over half of those appearing in more than 100 games last season were black (36 out of 65). For example, Chili Davis, Floyd Rayford, and two-time No. 1 draft choice Dan Gooden are blacks who were converted from catcher after being drafted.

"A black athlete, typically, is known for speed, power, endurance—all attributes of outfielders," says Miller. "I got that throughout my career: 'You can run and hit with power, so you should be in the outfield.'" Herzog agrees: "There's some truth to the speed factor. People make [blacks] outfielders."

So as long as American attitudes toward catching—mostly negative—remain as they are, Latin Americans will hustle to exploit the edge.

There's a catch, however. It's called "English," and the language barrier can be a serious handicap for Latinos. It can't deter an immense talent such as Ivan Rodriguez; the Rangers would gladly hire a tutor if necessary. But others are kept in the minors, working on their English fundamentals long after their baseball skills are ripe.

"Lack of communication is a big problem," Avila says. "The catcher is in charge. They say 90 percent of baseball is pitching, but 50 percent of pitching is catching. We've got a kid named Dilone Uribe [from the Dominican Republic] who's got a body like Campanella. For three years, I've been trying to teach him English, but he just can't learn the language." When Uribe

can speak English a fraction as well as he catches, his baseball future will probably be assured.

"Today, Latinos are doing the best job of instruction in the baseball world," Buck Rodgers says. "They get better coaching at a younger age than our kids. They all get an opportunity to see if they like catching; here, they don't even get that. Our talent pool is so low, anyone coming out of Latin America has a better chance if he can catch and throw."

"It's a position you've really got to want to play," says Miller, who had a love for catching few share. "It's not racism. No one's going, 'Whoa, this guy can't think enough to call a curveball, so we gotta move him to the outfield.' It takes a certain mentality; you've got to enjoy the pain. During my career, I saw seven, eight guys of all colors we tried to move to catcher from the outfield, and they wanted absolutely nothing to do with it."

Contrast that with the prospects John Roseboro worked with who streamed out of Campo las Palmas, the Dodgers' boot camp in the Dominican Republic. "Ralph Avila develops catchers down there, and he's one of the best at it," Roseboro says. "I saw a lot of guys with good arms who are agile, block the plate well and think well behind it. They develop catchers. We don't. Could be as simple as that." ★

"Little League is driving catchers out of the game; parents don't want their kids to catch."

"In another five years, 60 percent of the catchers in the majors will be Latinos."



Toronto's Carlos Delgado is one of several young Latin catchers primed to burst out in the bigs.

BASEBALL'S MOST RECENT
FREE-AGENT CLASS STARTED
A NEW TREND: SNUBBING
BIGGER BUCKS FOR THE
COMFORTS OF HOME

COMING HOME

EVER SINCE CURT FLOOD AND ANDY MESSERSMITH introduced the concept of free agency, the benefactors have spent their winters as mercenaries, determined to auction their services to the wealthiest bidder.

But baseball's free-agent class of 1992-93 decided to devote itself to a more noble cause: proving Thomas Wolfe was clueless.

You can't go home again? Tell that to David Cone, Doug Drabek, Dave Winfield, Greg Swindell

BY JEFF LENIHAN

RON WESELY



Doug Drabek,
Houston Astros

Largely because of his loyalty to Twins fans, Puckett rejected bigger bucks from the Red Sox to remain in Minnesota.

MICHAEL PONZINI

or even Barry Bonds.

The common theme to last winter's free-agent class was not grabbing every possible buck at the negotiating table but using its emancipation to go home. OK, so the free agents hauled in huge bucks anyway. But whereas free agents a decade ago felt they had to grab the most lucrative offer in order to assure financial security, free agents today have a more interesting and appealing choice: They're going to be wealthy enough to sustain a comfortable standard of living no matter where they play, so why not play at home?

"Maybe guys going home to play is going to be a new trend," says Cone, back for his second tour with his hometown Kansas City Royals. "I know it played a big part in what we all did. I'd say that every free agent who went home, with the exception of maybe one or two, could have made more money elsewhere. But I think this was the year that people gave more weight to other factors, whether it was hometown, the clubhouse atmosphere or the chance to win. This is the first year where I would say that for 95 percent of the guys, money was not the No. 1 factor."

Swindell and Drabek went back home to Texas, both signing free-agent pacts with the Houston Astros. Winfield, two decades into his major-league career, returned to hometown Minneapolis to play for the Twins. And Bonds, lured by a record \$43.75 million contract, went home to his City By the Bay to play for the Giants. Even Kirby Puckett, who snubbed millions from the Boston Red Sox, stayed in his adoptive home of Minneapolis-St. Paul because of sheer loyalty to the Twins and their fans and Puckett's own personal values.

There was, of course, one notable exception. Paul Molitor, who expected to be a Milwaukee Brewer until he turned completely gray and walked with a cane, crossed the Canadian border to play for the Toronto Blue Jays. Of course, his decision was as easy as catching a soft line drive: Milwaukee offered a one-year, \$2.5 million contract, while Toronto blew Molitor—and the

"I SWEAR TO GOD I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO BOSTON. I FELT LOYALTY TO THE TWINS, SURE, BUT IT FELT GOOD TO BE WANTED BY OTHER TEAMS."

— KIRBY PUCKETT

snubbed the New York Yankees.

"It's always been a dream for a kid to play in the city he grew up in, and that's what it's like for me," says Swindell, one of baseball's top left-handers, who spent his first six seasons with the Indians and last year with the Reds. "This is one of the three greatest pleasures in my life."

Not everything is so pleasurable when it comes to playing in front of your hometown. Barry Larkin, the Reds' All-Star shortstop, doesn't intend to put a damper on anyone's homecoming party, but he's in a position to give the new homeboys some expert advice—actually, a warning. "When you do well, playing at home is great," says Larkin, a lifelong Cincinnati resident. "When you don't, it can be terrible. There's a lot of pressure on you. People have seen you succeed in high school and right on through. They expect to see you always

Brewers—away with a three-year, \$13 million offer.

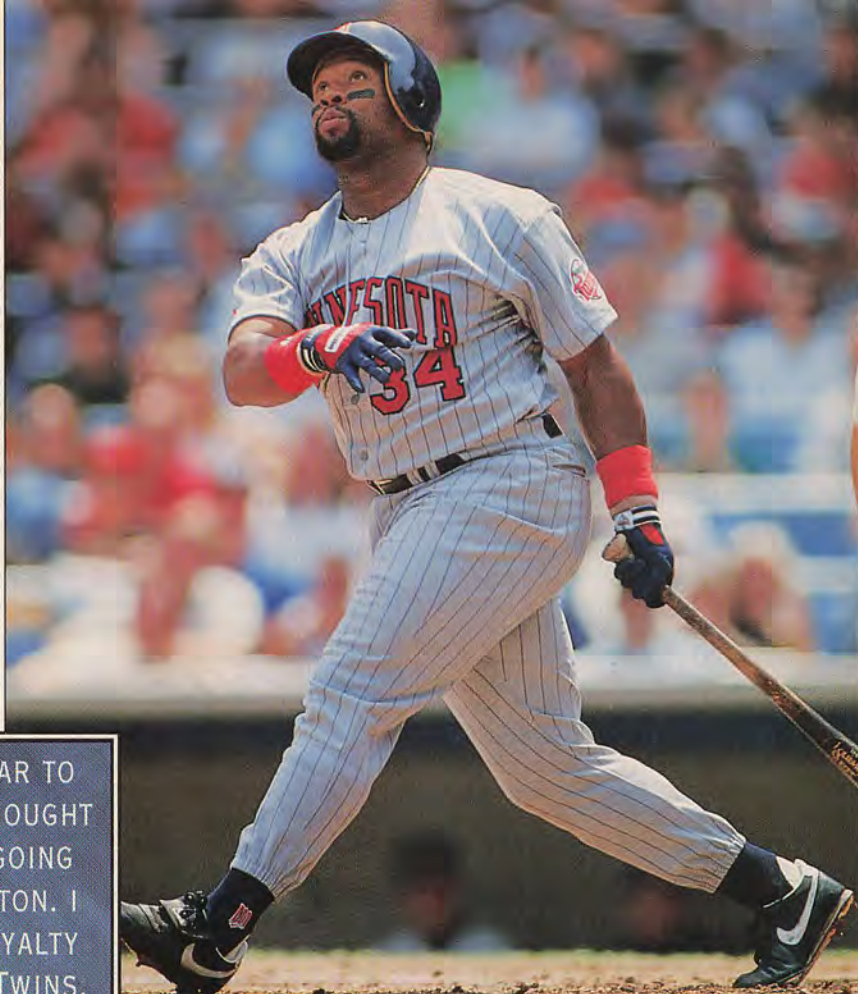
Every homeward-bound free agent except for Bonds left money on the negotiating table. While Puckett spurned the Red Sox, Cone, Drabek and Swindell all

succeed and never fail."

And then there are the ticket requests. And requests. And more requests. From your second cousin twice removed. From the kid that was the backup right fielder when you were the star shortstop of the T-ball team. From your neighbor's gardener's nephew. Larkin's solution: He bought a home in Florida that serves as a retreat. "It's great to see your buddies from [when you were] growing up," he says. "But it's great to get away too."

Cone is one of those rare people whose childhood dreams became a reality. As a kid growing up in Kansas City, all he fantasized about was pitching for the Royals. He was drafted by the Royals in 1981 and made his debut for them in '86, pitching in 11 games before being traded to the Mets in a lopsided deal for which the Royals were forever criticized. But Cone came back on his own—and he's ready for the onslaught of hearing from old friends.

"It's a drawback but a nice drawback," he says. "It's nice to be wanted, especially in your hometown. Friends are going to come out of the woodwork, sure. But I'm in a position now where I can help out the community. And I can help us get back to when I followed the team, when you could almost count on



us being in the playoffs every year."

Drabek left a situation in Pittsburgh where he was in the playoffs nearly every year as the ace of the Pirates' staff. But Drabek grew up in tiny Victoria, Texas, attended the University of Houston, and, after starting his professional career, bought a home in The Woodlands, a fashionable Houston suburb. Drabek, his wife Kristy and their three children lived a divided life, spending winters in Houston, springs in Bradenton, Fla., where the Pirates' spring-training facility is located, and summers in Pittsburgh.

Drabek says he often wondered what it'd be like spending 10 months in Houston, but he knew former Astros owner John McMullen would never dip into his bank account to bring him home. But when Drayton McLane Jr. bought the Astros in early November and promised to spend whatever it took to win, Drabek began dreaming again. His dream was fulfilled on Dec. 1, when he signed a four-year \$19.5 million contract. His heart was torn because of his love and dedication to the Pirates and manager Jim Leyland, but he was overwhelmed by the thought of pulling out of his own driveway in The Woodlands and driving to work at the Astrodome.

"There was so much right about going to Houston," Drabek says. "Being at home, the kids can stay in school. We

don't have to worry about moving or about taking care of two homes. On the other hand, our kids were sad about leaving our neighborhood in Wexford, about not seeing their friends again. We had to explain to them that it was OK. Plus, I was looking at a ballclub [Houston] that always played us tough. The team reminded me of the Pirates a few years ago: a bunch of young guys who grew together and began to win."

Swindell's situation mirrored Drabek's. Swindell was born in Ft. Worth, Texas, and grew up in Sharpstown. He led his high school to the Class 5-A state title in 1983, then went to the University of Texas before being drafted by the Indians, who dispatched the lifelong Texan to Waterloo, Iowa. Swindell was promoted to Cleveland that same season, and while laboring in Ohio for six years, he often "dreamed of going back home to pitch." Luckily for him, Drayton McLane came to his rescue.

BONDS' DECISION might've been the simplest of all the free agents. He grew up near San Francisco, and it just so happened that the club that floated the most lucrative offer was the Giants.

But Bonds returns to

San Francisco with a unique perspective: His closest friend is Brooklyn native Bobby Bonilla, whose return to New York last season was catastrophic. "It was a very tough year for Bobby," Bonds says. "But they'll come to love him. If you perform, it's easy to be accepted. If you struggle, it can be hell."

While Bonds is probably the NL's best all-around player, Puckett is arguably the best the AL has to offer. Puck is a native of the projects of Chicago, but he's made his home in Edina, outside of Minneapolis, for seven years. In fact, with his parents deceased, Puckett returns to Chicago only when the Twins do.

Of course, it's difficult for a player who just signed a \$30.5 million contract to talk about the money he *could* have made, but Puckett is in that unique position. "The Red Sox started at \$35 or \$36 million and were going to go up from there," he says of last winter's Kirby Sweepstakes. "I swear to God I thought

I was going to Boston. I felt loyalty to the Twins, sure, but it felt good to be wanted by other teams too. I was in a once-in-a-lifetime situation, and I had to look at it seriously. Being able to stay was one of the toughest decisions of my life, and I'm just glad it worked out the way it did. I always wanted to be a one-team player. You don't see that much anymore, and George Brett [of the Royals] told me you'll never understand the feeling until you really are able to do it.

"I've been with the Twins for nine years and won two world championships. I feel like I'm a part of the history around here....If I would have left, I would have missed everybody, from [owner] Carl Pohlad to [general manager] Andy MacPhail and right on down. Put it this way: If I was going to leave, it wouldn't be for the money. Some guys might want to do that, but for me it's going where you can win and where you can be around people you like."

Batting two spots behind Puckett in the Twins' lineup is the 41-year-old Winfield, a native of St. Paul, Minn., fresh off a World Series championship in Toronto.

"IT WOULD'VE BEEN EASIER TO STAY IN MILWAUKEE.... SOMETIMES I WONDER WHETHER I SHOULD HAVE FOUND A WAY TO STAY."

— PAUL MOLITOR



Winfield says winning a World Series with his hometown Twins "would be the ultimate."

"Growing up in St. Paul and attending the University of Minnesota, this was something I always thought about," says Winfield. "There were a few times earlier in my career that I thought it could happen, but the timing was never right. Something always seemed to come up. This time the timing was right."

Winfield, a three-sport star at St. Paul Central High who played basketball and baseball at the University of Minnesota, was so convinced he should finish his career in the Twin Cities that he—not his agent—initiated negotiations with the Twins by placing a call to MacPhail. One of the visions tugging at Winfield's heart was of Jack Morris, another St. Paul native, winning a World Series at the Metrodome in 1991. Winfield was actually envious of Morris.

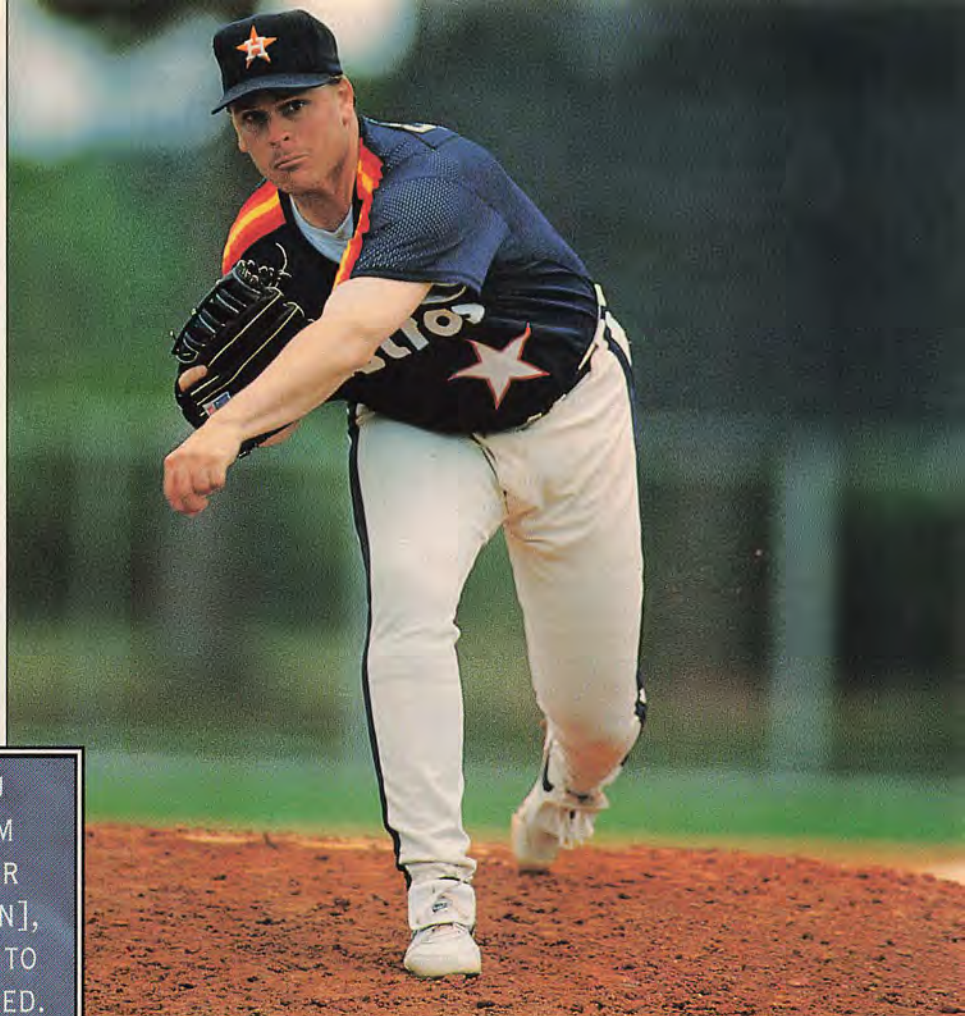
"I think for the most part I've been happy playing major-league baseball," Winfield says. "Last year, winning a World Series with Toronto, I was happier. But playing here I could be the happiest. Winning a World Series would be the ultimate."

Winfield is not so blind to the perils of playing in the area in which he grew up. When rumors of his imminent signing filtered through the community over the winter, he and wife Tonya were besieged with calls from friends, distant relatives and well-wishers. "It's going to be great to see those people again," Winfield says. "When I played with the Yankees, Angels and Blue Jays, I would only get back here twice a year, so it was always special. Now I'm going to be playing here every day. I've got a lot of work to do, and that's the first priority. I'm going to make time for people, but there's got to be a limit. I can't let those things interfere with the business at hand."

Like Winfield, Molitor was born in St. Paul, grew up in the same neighborhoods as Winfield and Morris, and attended the University of Minnesota. Despite those roots, Molitor was inextricably tied to the community of Milwaukee and the entire state of Wisconsin for 14 years. The third overall pick of the 1977 draft, Molitor quickly became a regular in the Milwaukee infield and a staple in one of baseball's more potent lineups. He helped the club to the post-season in 1981 and the World Series in

"IF YOU
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— BARRY BONDS



1982, fashioned an incredible 39-game hitting streak, stole three bases in an inning, hit three homers in a game and hit for the cycle. He was to the Brewers what malted barley is to one of the city's beers. Then—suddenly—he was gone.

While Cone, Drabek, Swindell and Winfield are downright delirious upon returning home, Molitor is somber about defecting. He felt out of place—actually uncomfortable—with his new Blue Jays teammates. He was homesick, like a kid attending his first summer overnight camp, longing for the love of his parents, brothers, sisters, friends. When Molitor reminisces about his days in Milwaukee, his days with his longtime buddy, Robin Yount, he speaks with regret, resentment.

"I don't know when that's going to wear off," he says. "I had kind of been spoiled by the stability. I'm not good with big changes. I didn't know how I was going to handle this until I actually joined the team. It would've been easier to stay in Milwaukee. There's the logistics of it and there is the loyalty I feel for that organization. Sometimes I wonder whether I should have found a way

to stay."

Molitor, who earned \$3.4 million in '92, was asked by the cost-cutting, small-market Brewers to take a pay cut of roughly \$1 million, despite the fact he was coming off two seasons in which he hit .323 with 411 hits, 222 runs, 117 extra-base hits and 164 RBI. Molitor might have accepted less than the Toronto offer to stay home, but the Brewers weren't even competitive.

"When salaries are huge, people say, 'How many millions do you need?'" Molitor says. "Robin [Yount] was getting a little bump from last year, so I felt this wasn't right. We talked to a couple of clubs, and Milwaukee didn't move."

So Molitor did, and while some of the game's brightest stars find happiness back home, Molitor will spend his summer learning what it's like to leave his home behind. ★

Jeff Lenihan is a sportswriter for the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*.

After pitching in Ohio for seven years, Swindell, a Texas native, was ready to come home.

JON SOCHO/BERNSTEIN ASSOC.

MEMORIES

Umpires get a unique perspective on the game of baseball. Their stationing behind the plate allows them to listen to and talk with the players. We recently spoke with a couple of veteran umps concerning their views on the game, past and present.

Bruce Froemming, at age 18, became the youngest ever to umpire professionally. He joined the National League in 1971 and won numerous awards, including ones in 1986 and '91 for being voted the top umpire in the National League, as selected by the players and managers. Froemming, now retired, worked two All-Star games—in 1975 and '86—as well as seven League Championship Series and three World Series (1976, '84 and '88).

Dutch Rennert, who in 1978 received the highly coveted Red Smith Award for outstanding contribution to our national pastime, is a veteran of six playoff series, three World Series and two All-Star games.

SPORT: During the 1988 ALCS, umpire Terry Cooney threw Red Sox star pitcher Roger Clemens out of the game for cursing at him. Was that proper? In such an important game, should the team and fans be deprived of seeing the best pitcher in baseball just for saying a few swear words?

RENNERT: Absolutely the right call. Clemens was challenging Cooney, and an umpire cannot lose control of a game at any time, whether it be exhibition, regular season or a World Series game.

FROEMMING: An umpire must make the players understand that he is in charge of the game at all times. He can't take any BS from anyone. I call it the rattlesnake deal. Have you ever heard of a rattlesnake advising that he is about to strike? When a manager of a player gets out of control, I toss him, no warning—you're out of here. Warning is a sign of weakness. I treat everyone with the same consistency. I show respect and you do the same.

SPORT: Of all the thousands of

pitchers you have seen throw, who was the most overpowering?

RENNERT: No question about it: J.R. Richard of Houston when he was in his prime. He was 6-8, muscular, and when he threw the ball, he had no idea where it was going, nor did the catcher.

FROEMMING: I agree with Dutch. J.R. Richard was the man. He about

sion. But I would also have to put Tom Seaver of the Mets in the same class, and so was Bob Gibson of the Cardinals in his prime.

SPORT: Who was the meanest pitcher you ever saw pitch?

FROEMMING: I'd have to say Bob Gibson. If you even thought about moving in on the plate, he would stick it in your ear.

RENNERT: Don Drysdale was mean, but so was Bob Gibson in his heyday. He took no nonsense from the batters, and the hitters learned to respect that. In 1968, he was as overpowering as a pitcher could be.

SPORT: Who was the nuttiest pitcher you've ever seen?

RENNERT: The Mad Hungarian, Al Hrabosky. He would stomp around on the pitcher's mound like a crazy man, a man possessed.

FROEMMING: I used to like to watch him. I had no idea what all that stomping meant. I don't know if he was psyching himself up or was just trying to get into show biz.

SPORT: Who was the best catcher you ever saw?

RENNERT: All-around, I would say Johnny Bench. He could do it all—hit for power, hit for average, run the bases, and he was a fine defensive player.

FROEMMING: From a defensive standpoint, the best I ever saw was Jerry Grote. He also had, by far, the finest arm I ever saw.

SPORT: Who is the most talkative catcher?

RENNERT: I would say that Gary Carter has the most to say. His tongue is wagging all the time about this and that.

FROEMMING: Mike LaValliere,

Rennert says Bench, an integral component of the 1970s' Big Red Machine, was the best all-around catcher he ever saw.



SPORT ARCHIVE killed his catcher, Cliff Johnson. Balls would be bouncing all over the place when he first started out.

SPORT: Who was the best pitcher you ever saw?

RENNERT: I would have to say Steve Carlton of the Phillies. He was such a professional pitcher. Up, down, inside and out, and he was always in control of all his pitches.

FROEMMING: I would also say that Carlton was probably the best. When he was on the mound, he was all business. No nonsense, a man on a mis-

[formerly] of the Pirates, talks a lot. As a whole, though, most catchers are very businesslike, and when they put on the mask, they're very serious.

SPORT: Who was the greatest base runner you ever saw?

RENNERT: Lou Brock was the finest I've ever seen. Remember, Rickey Henderson is in the American League.

FROEMMING: Lou Brock is probably the finest I've seen too. But Pete Rose was also a great base runner—not as fast as Brock but smart. When Rose ran, you never got him out.

SPORT: Of all the hitters you've seen, who hit the ball the hardest?

FROEMMING: Mike Schmidt, no doubt. He could really crush that ball. Great all-around player.

RENNERT: I'd say Schmidt, also, but Willie Stargell of the Pirates could also lay the wood on the ball.

SPORT: Overall, would you say baseball is well-umpired? Are you given enough support from the league so that you can go about your business?

RENNERT: Yes, I think we do a great job. We're only human, so we might miss a few, but overall we're right on the money.

FROEMMING: Remember, baseball umpires are paid out of New York, not by the clubs. We're protected by the integrity of the game. On the other hand, professional football is pathetic. Referees are allowed to take too much abuse. Jerry Seeman, the NFL supervisor of officials, was recently quoted as saying abuse is part of the job. That's a crime. What the NFL needs is a Richie Phillips to get the officials the respect they need to do the job, and the NFL, if it wants to be a first-class sport, needs first-class, full-time officials, not officials that teach school or have other full-time jobs all week and then referee on the weekends.

The best officiating in college basketball is done at NCAA tournament time when the coaches, such as Bobby Knight of Indiana, can't beat on them and can't hold over their heads that he can get their job. All tournament games are officiated by at-large officials, not assigned to the conference from which the teams are represented, and this makes for stronger and better officiating because they are not intimidated.★

—Richard Watt, Mr. Memorabilia

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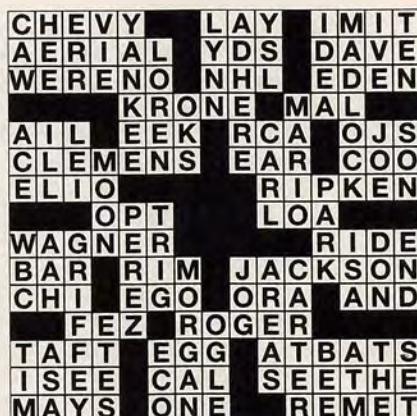
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SPORT'S 1993 FOOTBALL PREDICTIONS!

August 1993 Issue
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NEXT MONTH IN
SPORT

BOBBY HURLEY WENT FROM A SCRAWNY POUTER
TO COLLEGE'S MOST DAZZLING FLOOR LEADER,
AND NOW HE'S READY TO TAKE HIS GAME
TO THE NBA/BY MICHAEL BRADLEY

COMING Of Age

The Assist-O-Meter in the upper corner of Cameron Indoor Stadium is spinning like a pinwheel in a hurricane. The countdown to the NCAA record is on, and Bobby Hurley is dishing 'em up nearly every time down court. Even though Duke has one more home game to play, the Blue Devils' zealots want the record—and want it *now*—against UCLA, the same day Hurley's number 11 has been lifted to the Cameron rafters.

So what if Hurley began the game needing 20 assists to bust Chris Corchiani's mark? Hurley is in the kind of zone normally reserved for shooters. He's like Joe Montana during a two-minute drill. Bang, bang, bang. Every time down, the choices are overwhelming. A post entry to Cherokee Parks? Kick it out to Chris Collins for the jumper? An alley-oop to Thomas Hill? The choices are all too easy.

For the past week, Hurley has been downright avaricious. Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski had redesigned the Devils' motion offense following star forward Grant Hill's toe injury, requiring Hurley to handle the ball even more than usual. No more pass-and-cut. Now it's pass-and-hover. If something doesn't happen immediately, Hurley's responsibility is to get the ball and start again. "I'm playing more like a point guard," Hurley says. "I've been just getting back to running the team and thinking about my shot second."

The results are staggering. He smokes North Carolina State for 15 assists and hits Florida State for a school-record 16 three days after that. And now Hurley's going for the record against UCLA, needing an improbable 20 to get it. It's the point guard in his purest, natural state.

Assist No. 10: Dribble-penetrate into the lane, dish to Thomas Hill for a jumper. No. 11: Dart to the basket, drawing a cadre of Bruins, overhead pass to Hill for an easy layup. No. 12: Finds Hill off a screen for a jumper.

But, alas, the Assist-O-Meter stops at 15, five short of the mark. Had Hill converted a couple of the alley-oops, and if Antonio Lang had made the layup after an outrageous behind-the-back, in-traffic lane pass, maybe Hurley would have his record. No one's too disappointed, though; Hurley has completed a three-game, 46-assist sequence that ranks among the best ever by someone at his position. Three days later, against Maryland, the record falls.

Coach K, who rarely loses that professorial countenance of his, has prepared a little homework lesson when asked about Hurley. "A lot of people who have been around the ACC look at these kinds of performances by Bobby as commonplace," Professor K says. "But I would like you to sit back while you're writing...and reflect on who's done it better. I'm not sure anybody has been better than Hurley. Fifteen, 16, 15. You gotta be kidding me."

BRIAN SAUJALOCK

Krzyzewski is talking about the big picture, not only Hurley's just-completed three-game clinic. He's talking about four years of unparalleled success at the point. About the fall and rise of the Jersey City kid, in which a sunken-eyed, scrawny guy with the funny haircut goes from pouting freshman to the college game's best point guard—a 115-24 record as a starter, two NCAA title rings, an 18-2 tournament record, deity status in Durham, and a future in the NBA that was once universally doubted because of size, maturity, this and that.

"A real easy [way] to describe Bobby is, he wins," Krzyzewski says. "Put that in the scouting report or evaluation. He can shoot the three, he puts good pressure on the ball, great passer...he wins. He wins."

What we're talking about with Hurley is a big-time transformation. After all, isn't this the same kid who left the 1990 NCAA title game against UNLV to go to the bathroom? Stomach virus, my eye. Those Vegas meanies had scared the you-know-what out of Hurley. The kid just couldn't take it.

To many, that's the enduring memory of Bobby Hurley. The freshman who was ground into oatmeal for gleeful consumption by Jerry Tarkanian's slot-machine gunners. Well, time for an update: Hurley leaves Duke the quintessential college floor leader and enters the NBA without any doubts of attaining success against those bigger, sharp-shooting one guards.

"He's everything a point guard should be," North Carolina coach Dean Smith says.

No question about it now: The kid can play—anywhere.

"The No. 1 thing about him is that he has won big-time wherever he's been," says Philadelphia 76ers general manager Jimmy Lynam. "He's been more than just an average competitor. There are competitors and guys who flat-out hate to lose. He's going to find a way to win."

Sure, Hurley has had the luxury of being surrounded by guys such as the Hills, Christian Laettner and Alaa Abdelnaby. But he's been in charge from the start. Folks may remember Laettner's miracle



"He's everything a point guard should be."

— North Carolina coach Dean Smith

turnaround jumper against Kentucky in last year's East Regional final as the defining moment of Duke's two-championship run, but it was Hurley's big-time three-pointer against Vegas in the national semis one year earlier that had started the whole thing. Sweet vindication. No intestinal problems there. Hurley stepped up and pulled the trigger. Bang. Vegas was dead.

"Bobby is daring but not reckless," Krzyzewski says. "He has no problem putting himself in a position that most peo-

ple would never want to be in and then accepting the responsibility for it. Bobby's not afraid to fail. He's not afraid to put himself on the line."

The cynics still may sneer. Get ready, kid, 'cause failure is right around the corner. Sticking it to UCLA is one thing. Doing it to the Chicago Bulls is another. For four years, the "experts" filled their assessments with disclaimers and qualifiers. Sure, Hurley can make the right decision on the break nearly every time, but he's too small to play NBA defense. He did improve his jump-shot range, but he can't create his own shot. He's too small, too slow, too white. You half expect to hear the following on draft day: *The Charlotte Hornets select Bobby Hurley from Duke University, but...*

Hurley doesn't care about the butts. "When Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan are saying so many great things about me, any so-called expert of the pro game can say what he wants," Hurley says. "Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson know when they see a player. They saw I could compete at that level."

Hurley ran the squad that scrimmaged the Dream Team with the same kind of dare that he employed at Duke. He treated the pros as he did Florida State or Clemson. A no-look lob pass here. A behind-the-back lane feed there. Hurley and his college mates' accomplishments may have been exaggerated a little by the press—"I saw [the Dream Team] lose 33-0," says Krzyzewski, an Olympic assistant—but Hurley's game was never questioned. Myth becomes truth. They did have to put Jordan on him when Magic

and John Stockton failed.

"The big surprise was his quickness with the basketball," Johnson says. "It's really amazing how quick he can get that ball down and then change directions. We were sitting back waiting on him, but by the time he changed directions, our feet were planted, and he was by us—myself, Michael, whoever was guarding him."

Hurley doesn't head into the NBA ready to handle Stockton, Mark Price and Kevin Johnson. It's a long, 82-game schedule. But if Hurley proved anything during his time at Duke, it was the ability to grow. He stopped squawking at the refs. He learned to be more objective when assessing his performances. He learned about the fragility of fame following his much-publicized DUI arrest in the spring of '92. He got bigger and stronger. His shot improved. And most of all, he did what all college students do: mature. He may still look like a Bowery Boy in Adidas high-tops, his ubiquitous backward baseball cap covering that spiked fade haircut. But inside, Hurley is an on-court leader, a pressure performer and a real honest-to-Cousy point guard.

"Being a part of two national-championship teams really increased my confidence because I've won at the highest level," Hurley says. "I've competed against the best players in the country and I've held my own...and I've been able to reach a level of consistency on the court."

Now he'll try to do it in the pros. Hurley will need a little luck, since his game is better suited to an up-tempo attack. Still, he isn't overmatched in the halfcourt.

"He has a tremendously high basketball IQ," says Dave Twardzik, the Charlotte Hornets' player personnel director. "He's not a tremendously high talent. He's not the fastest, and he doesn't jump the highest. But he compensates for that with his IQ and competitiveness. The streets are littered with guys who had the skills but didn't have a feel for the game."


"There's no question he can play," says NBA scouting director Marty Blake. "I like his intensity and his knowledge of the game."

So Hurley moves on to a new challenge. This time it isn't Vegas in the Final Four. It's tough to imagine him mixing it up with the game's elite; after all, he still looks like a kid, doesn't he? "I think there will always be a little of that around me," Hurley says about his CYO image. "My goal is that people will strictly concentrate on my game and not a lot of other things."

"I know it's going to be a tough transition, but I think I can be a very good player for a team, as far as getting the ball to people. I think I see the court well and have a good understanding of it. I think I can get a lot of assists at that level."

The meter is running. ★





THE SPORT 1993 NBA DRAFT PREVIEW

DESPITE BIG-NAME EARLY ENTRANTS INTO THE DRAFT,
THE PICKIN'S ARE SLIM/ BY MICHAEL BRADLEY

Last year's NBA draft had scouts and general managers drooling because of its depth and scope of talent. This year's crop will have them gagging.

Barring a mass exodus of underclassmen—we're talking double figures here—this year's draft shapes up as a disappointment.

"After a certain point, there's nothing there," says Los Angeles Lakers scout Ronnie Lester. "You may have some players taken in the first round that don't even make their clubs. But you gotta draft somebody."

The center and forward spots are particularly weak, even with the defection of Kentucky strongman Jamal Mashburn and the expected early entries of Michigan's Chris Webber and Wake Forest's Rodney Rogers. There's depth in the backcourt, but many NBA teams would rather choose big men. Maybe next year.

Kentucky
forward
Jamal
Mashburn.

BRIAN SPURLOCK

ATLANTA HAWKS

Needs: With Jon Koncak and Blair Rasmussen, Atlanta's middle is softer than a jelly donut. The Hawks need presence in the middle—*desperately*. Backcourt depth wouldn't hurt either. Mookie Blaylock is a revelation at the point, and Dominique Wilkins rebounded from Achilles tendon surgery with a vengeance. There isn't much behind them though.

Projected pick: J.R. Rider, guard, UNLV. Since schoolwork is not required in the NBA, Rider won't have to worry about writing term papers. Instead, he'll charge off the bench firing, and keep the offensive intensity high when Wilkins sits. Rider's outside shot has improved, and he's a superior finisher around the basket.

BOSTON CELTICS

Needs: Frontcourt, frontcourt and frontcourt. Larry Bird hung 'em up, Kevin McHale will do so this year, Robert Parish probably goes next season, and a front line of Xavier McDaniels, Joe Kleine and Ed Pinckney certainly isn't going to hang any banners in the rafters.

Projected pick: Ed Stokes, center, Ari-

zona. He'll spend a year caddying for Parish, an apprenticeship that will do Stokes good. He had a strong freshman year but slumped as a soph and junior. His 7-0, 266-pound frame is well-suited for the NBA, but he needs to be more active. He's a question mark, but the Celtics won't have much to choose from.

CHARLOTTE HORNETS

Needs: Guard Muggsy Bogues is having another productive season, but he's a defensive liability and is better suited to coming off the bench. Adding a quality forward to the Larry Johnson/Alonzo Mourning tandem would make Charlotte deadly. With two picks (they own San Antonio's from the J.R. Reid trade), the Hornets could satisfy both needs.

Projected picks: Bobby Hurley, guard, Duke; Josh Grant, forward, Utah. Though the Hornets were burned by drafting hometown favorite Reid in '89, they won't get singed by Hurley. The NCAA's all-time assist leader is a marvel in the open court and has improved his shooting range considerably. Grant has questions, most notably his achy-breaky knee and his age (26 in August). But he's an excellent passer and can play inside or out.

CHICAGO BULLS

Needs: Imagine a real center—not Bill Cartwright or Will Perdue, but a young colt—trailing Mike, Scottie and Horace. Frightening, huh? But, hey, where the heck are the Bulls gonna get a big man from where they're pickin'? So GM Jerry Krause's top-secret travels and tryouts would be best served to replenish the reserve unit. Backup help is needed at nearly every position.

Projected pick: Scott Burrell, forward/guard, Connecticut. Burrell could end up playing major-league baseball (he's spent three summers in the minors as a pitcher), but if he chooses the hardwood, he'll bring an inside-outside versatility and outstanding athletic ability to energize a weak bench.

CLEVELAND CAVALIERS

Needs: The Cavs lack a mean streak. It's not easy finding a strongman in the lower depths of the first round, so Cleveland

may have to settle for a backcourt scorer to come off the bench.

Projected pick: Lindsey Hunter, guard, Jackson State. This 6-2 gunner proved his mettle against some of the nation's best as a senior, including a 48-point effort against Kansas in the Maui Classic, 43 against Illinois, and 39 vs. Connecticut. He averaged 26.7 ppg.

DALLAS MAVERICKS

Needs: Aside from Jimmy Jackson and aging point guard Derek Harper, Dallas is a mess. Start with the best available big man—forward or center—and go from there. Proceed to small forward, backcourt depth, etc.

Projected pick: Shawn Bradley, center, BYU. No one can turn down a skilled 7-7 center, even if he hasn't played competitive ball in two years. He is not the next Manute Bol. Nor is he the next Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, however.

DENVER NUGGETS

Needs: The last two drafts have been good to the Nuggets—Dikembe Mutombo and LaPhonso Ellis—but two youngsters and a revitalized Chris Jackson do not a team make. The Nuggets need a big-time scorer at guard—Bryant Stith, Mark Macon and Todd Lichti can't cut it—and depth at forward.

Projected pick: *Rodney Rogers, forward, Wake Forest. OK, so he's not a guard, but he's a powerful scorer and rebounder and too good to pass up. A 6-7 musclemann, Rogers has sound ballhandling skills and shooting range to go with his powerful inside game.

DETROIT PISTONS

Needs: After winning two titles with their Bad Boys persona, the Pistons are just plain bad these days. They lack a scorer up front and have no backcourt depth. The veterans are old, the youngsters not too good. Defense counts more than ever these days, but you need to score. Isiah Thomas and Joe Dumars are the only threats, though Terry Mills has been a surprise up front. Since the Pistons have their pick plus Miami's from the John Salley deal, they have a chance to improve quickly.

Projected picks: Chris Mills, forward, Arizona; Malcolm Mackey, forward, Georgia Tech. Plug Mills in at small forward and watch the 6-6 talent become an NBA star. He played four positions at Arizona, scores inside and out, and will even take a few boards away from Dennis Rodman. Mack-



BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

UConn swingman Scott Burrell will provide inside-outside versatility to an NBA bench.

ey's a 6-10 banger who's active. He averaged 15.9 ppg and 10.4 rpg as a senior and will give the Pistons more pop up front. He'll provide depth at the four and five spots and could start at forward if Rodman departs.

GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS

Needs: The Warriors were killed by injuries, but let's face it: They're still the NBA's only team that could play in the 6-8-and-under league. Nellie, please get some big people—and we're not talking the Chris Gatling/Victor Alexander ilk.

Projected pick: Ervin Johnson, center, New Orleans. Johnson's metamorphosis from a supermarket checkout clerk to a big-time low-post scorer is stunning. Johnson (18.3 ppg, 12.3 rpg as a senior) enters the NBA with a maturity developed from earning a living in the real world and a tremendous work ethic. At 6-11, 240, the 25-year-old will give Golden State a much-needed presence in the middle.

HOUSTON ROCKETS

Needs: The Rockets rebounded spectacularly from 1991-92's season of acrimony, but they're not particularly big and strong—after Hakeem Olajuwon and Otis Thorpe—and could use an off-guard who shoots better than Vernon Maxwell's 40 percent.

Projected pick: Nick Van Exel, guard, Cincinnati. He's arrogant and sometimes out of control, but Van Exel can shoot from the outer limits. The cornerstone of Cincinnati's success, Van Exel plays tough D and distributes the ball. He's too flashy at times and can miss several shots in a row—and keep firing—but he's a good risk for a team with a shallow backcourt. "He'll shoot you into a game or shoot you out of a game," says Lester, the Lakers' scout.

INDIANA PACERS

Needs: Rik Smits' new long-term contract means the Pacers think he's the answer in the middle. Wonder if they'd like to buy some land? Even if Smits produces, Indiana needs more scoring up front. Dale Davis can bang but can't score. The Pacers could use some bench pop too. George McCloud, Sam Mitchell and Malik Sealy aren't answers.

Projected pick: Allan Houston, guard, Tennessee. After early-season fanfare, Houston disappeared, mostly because of the sorry job his dad did coaching the Vols. Houston, a smooth off-guard with big-time three-point range, averaged 22.3 ppg as a senior, was a member of the squad that

scrimmaged the Dream Team last year, and should thrive in Dan Issel's up-tempo offense.

LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS

Needs: With Danny Manning and Ken Norman ready to jump ship, the Clippers need starting forwards. Ron Harper, who might also depart, goes at it pretty much alone at off-guard. So take your pick, Clips.

Projected pick: George Lynch, forward, North Carolina. Lynch is a typical North Carolina guy, sound, hard-working, not flamboyant. Just successful. Lynch's strong inside play in the tournament improved his stock, but there are questions about his shooting range. He leaves Carolina as the all-time leader in steals and third on its rebounding list. "You don't accomplish that without being a great player," says Cincinnati coach Bob Huggins.

LOS ANGELES LAKERS

Needs: Acquiring Doug Christie might solve the point-guard problem, but Vlade Divac's inconsistency leaves the middle muddled, particularly with Benoit Benjamin around. With James Worthy older, and Elden Campbell fulfilling little promise, GM Jerry West better look for big people.

Projected pick: Vin Baker, forward, Hartford. At 6-11, he could be an inside/outside scoring machine. He didn't get tested much in the North Atlantic Conference, but he attracted NBA scouts wherever he played and can light up scoreboards (28.3 ppg as a senior) in the open court or in half-court sets.

MIAMI HEAT

Needs: The Heat is still searching for stability at power forward. Salley is a role player, Grant Long is limited. Unless it can swing a deal, Miami's stuck. Salley didn't come cheap; he cost the Heat this year's first-round pick.

Projected pick: None.

MILWAUKEE BUCKS

Needs: The Bucks are one of the league's poorest rebounding teams, and a gaping hole in the middle is responsible. Frank Brickowski is not a center. Brad Loehaus and Danny Schayes are tired backups. Milwaukee could also use another pure



Cincinnati guard Nick Van Exel "can shoot you into a game or shoot you out of a game," says Lakers scout Lester.

scorer, besides Blue Edwards. Few teams put up less points than the Bucks.

Projected pick: Calbert Cheaney, guard/forward, Indiana. Cheaney is unstoppable and left Indiana as the Big Ten's all-time leading scorer. Despite playing in Bob Knight's rigid system, Cheaney demonstrated an ability to shoot from the outside, along with superior skills on the break. His 6-6 frame made him a forward in college, but it will suit him well at either the two or three spot in the NBA.

MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES

Needs: The T-Wolves have spent two top picks on centers and ended up with 14 feet of nothing—Luc Longley and Felton Spencer. The pivot is an obvious need, but dare the Wolves risk another center bust? They should, but a weak crop forces them to look elsewhere. Not that there aren't plenty of other needs. Micheal Williams is not a top point guard, and off-guard Doug West has no one behind him.

Projected pick: *Chris Webber, forward, Michigan. Though the 6-9 power for-



BRUCE SCHWARTZMAN

threes) and handle the point.

PHILADELPHIA 76ERS

Needs: Now that the Doug Moe run-and-gun experiment has been scrapped, the Sixers can get on with the business of rebuilding the rubble of a once-proud franchise. Start the work up front. Other than productive Clarence Weatherspoon, Philadelphia is soft on the glass and impotent on the scoring sheet along the forward line. Anyone's an improvement.

Projected pick: Acie Earl, center, Iowa. Earl's shot blocking and improved offense will help immediately. Though only 6-10, he's a solid 240, and he brings a good attitude with an uncanny ability to make off-balance shots. "I'm liking him more and more," Sixers GM Jimmy Lynam says. "He doesn't look like he's doing a lot, but after the game, he has his points, rebounds and blocks."

PHOENIX SUNS

Needs: As good and deep as the Suns are, they're still weak in the middle. Charles Barkley's rebounding takes pressure off the pivot, but Mark West is not a championship center, and Oliver Miller's weight problem is a worry. The Suns must find a big man to play defense and provide low-post offense. Phoenix could also use some backcourt depth—particularly since Kevin Johnson always seems to be injured.

Projected pick: Spencer Dunkley, center, Delaware. Dunkley may have hurt his rep by talking junk about Louisville's Clifford Rozier before the Cards dispatched Delaware in the tourney, but NBA scouts like his potential. In a stronger draft, Dunkley falls to round two, but his solid 6-11 frame and athletic skills developed while playing soccer in England make him an intriguing project.

PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS

Needs: What was once the league's most dangerous offense is now inconsistent. The Blazers aren't strong on defense, either, and their rebounding is erratic. Center is the place to start: Kevin Duckworth is soft, Cliff Robinson is a power forward, and Buck Williams will be 34. There's also concern at the three spot, where Jerome Kersey has tailed off.

Projected pick: Sam Cassell, guard, Florida State. Though he played some point while Charlie Ward recovered from a shoulder injury, Cassell has three-point range and excels in the open court. At 6-3,

Memphis State's Anfernee Hardaway, a 6-7 point guard, has a big-time ability to distribute the ball and score.

ward's shooting range is limited, he's a tremendous ballhandler, a lightning-quick jumper and a terror on the offensive boards. He'll be a dominant power forward in the NBA.

NEW JERSEY NETS

Needs: All depends. If Drazen Petrovic's contract needs can't be satisfied, the Nets need a big-time backcourt scorer. If Petro returns, head coach Chuck Daly would love to get some defense and rebounding off the bench. Center's a problem, particularly if free-agent foul-line bricklayer and rebounding stalwart Chris Dudley leaves.

Projected pick: Terry Dehere, guard, Seton Hall. The 6-4 Dehere finished with a flourish, scoring at will in the Big East tournament and lighting it up in the Pirates' tourney games. Dehere has a shooter's attitude—launch anytime—but needs to work on his defense. He's an excellent scorer, something the Nets could use off the bench.

NEW YORK KNICKS

Needs: Given the Knicks' physical style, Pat Riley should be canvassing New York's boxing gyms in search of more en-

forcers. He won't find one in the draft, since Orlando owns his first-round pick from the Stanley Roberts/Charles Smith three-way deal.

Projected pick: None.

ORLANDO MAGIC

Needs: Shaq-mania obscured the hole at forward. Tom Tolbert, Jeff Turner and Anthony Bowie are not quality starters, and O'Neal was often all alone underneath. That's not too daunting for the 7-1, 303-pound man-child, but even the best pivot-men have some help. The Magic also has to worry about some more scoring pop, given the fragile physique of gunner Dennis Scott. GM Pat Williams has options since he owns a pair of first-rounders (his own, plus New York's).

Projected picks: Doug Edwards, forward, Florida State; Rex Walters, guard, Kansas. On a Florida State team dominated by its backcourt, Edwards went unnoticed—until tournament time. He has good size (6-9, 220) and is active around the iron (18.5 ppg, 9.0 rpg). He'll take some rebounding pressure off Shaq and can get his points inside or along the baseline. Walters is a 6-4 combination guard who can drill it from long range (42 percent on

he's a little small to guard many of the league's two guards, but he'll serve well with his offense.

SACRAMENTO KINGS

Needs: The Kings are slowly improving, but their presence up front is still soft. Wayman Tisdale and Lionel Simmons are accomplished scorers, but neither is a barbarian on the boards or a stopper on defense. Though center Duane Causwell can both rebound and play D, he's not a scorer in the pivot. The Kings would do well to grab the biggest, meanest guy they can find.

Projected pick: Jamal Mashburn, forward, Kentucky. No other player in the draft offers such unique inside-outside ability. The 6-8 Mashburn can shoot the three like a guard and pound inside. He looks to the pass as his first option and handles the ball well in the open court. He could have stayed an extra year at Kentucky, but what's the point? The man is ready. If he doesn't start 70 games, something's wrong in Sacramento.

SAN ANTONIO SPURS

Needs: John Lucas better hope that Terry Cummings returns from knee surgery and that Avery Johnson is the answer at the point, because San Antonio dealt its first-round pick to Charlotte for J.R. Reid.

Projected pick: None.



BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

SEATTLE SUPERSONICS

Needs: What do you get for a team that has everything? How about a live low-post scorer to take pressure off Shawn Kemp? Well, that ain't gonna happen late in the first round, so the Sonics should look to firm up the backcourt behind ever-improving trash-talker extraordinaire Gary Payton and aging Ricky Pierce.

Projected pick: Lucious Harris, guard, Long Beach State. The Big West Conference's all-time leading scorer averaged 23.0 ppg and was the major reason the 49ers earned the league's automatic berth in the NCAA tournament. Harris has the size (6-5) to play off-guard and the experience playing the point. "He plays like a pro in a college uniform," says Fullerton State coach Brad Holland. "He doesn't have a weakness."

UTAH JAZZ

Needs: The Jazz will never accomplish anything more than a berth in the Western Conference finals with Mark Eaton in the middle. It may be impossi-

Seton Hall guard Terry Dehere has a shooter's mentality and can score, but needs to work on his defense.

THE SPORT MAGAZINE TOP 27

1. *CHRIS WEBBER	6-9	FORWARD	MICHIGAN
2. JAMAL MASHBURN	6-8	FORWARD	KENTUCKY
3. ANFERNEE HARDAWAY	6-7	GUARD	MEMPHIS STATE
4. SHAWN BRADLEY	7-7	CENTER	BYU
5. CALBERT CHEANEY	6-6	GUARD/FORWARD	INDIANA
6. RODNEY ROGERS	6-7	FORWARD	WAKE FOREST
7. ALLAN HOUSTON	6-6	GUARD	TENNESSEE
8. ACIE EARL	6-10	CENTER	IOWA
9. CHRIS MILLS	6-6	FORWARD	ARIZONA
10. ERVIN JOHNSON	6-11	CENTER	NEW ORLEANS
11. MALCOLM MACKEY	6-11	FORWARD	GEORGIA TECH
12. DOUG EDWARDS	6-9	FORWARD	FLORIDA STATE
13. TERRY DEHERE	6-4	GUARD	SETON HALL
14. BOBBY HURLEY	6-1	GUARD	DUKE
15. GEORGE LYNCH	6-8	FORWARD	NORTH CAROLINA
16. J.R. RIDER	6-5	GUARD	UNLV
17. VIN BAKER	6-11	FORWARD	HARTFORD
18. SAM CASSELL	6-3	GUARD	FLORIDA STATE
19. LUTHER WRIGHT	7-2	CENTER	SETON HALL
20. ED STOKES	7-0	CENTER	ARIZONA
21. JOSH GRANT	6-8	FORWARD	UTAH
22. LINDSEY HUNTER	6-2	GUARD	JACKSON STATE
23. NICK VAN EXEL	6-2	GUARD	CINCINNATI
24. LUCIOUS HARRIS	6-5	GUARD	LONG BEACH STATE
25. REX WALTERS	6-4	GUARD	KANSAS
26. SCOTT BURRELL	6-7	FORWARD/GUARD	CONNECTICUT
27. SPENCER DUNKLEY	6-11	CENTER	DELAWARE

*Denotes possible early entry into NBA

ble to dunk on the guy, but he's slow and a liability on offense. The backcourt is thin, even with the addition of Jay Humphries. John Stockton and Jeff Malone are being asked to do too much.

Projected pick: Luther Wright, center, Seton Hall. He's a risk, but he's 7-2, 275, and NBA GMs are willing to take those kinds of gambles. Few will argue that Wright can use another year of seasoning in college, but he can get it caddying for Eaton.

WASHINGTON BULLETS

Needs: Michael Adams is not a point guard. And Rex Chapman isn't doing too well at shooting guard. If the Bullets can find a real-live distributor at the point, Adams would be a marvel coming off the bench. And even though Chapman's shooting percentage has improved, he's too inconsistent to be a starter on a good team. But since the Bullets aren't very good, he fits in nicely.

Projected pick: Anfernee Hardaway, guard, Memphis State. "Penny" took a thin, young team into the NCAA tournament with his myriad skills. Though he could play any of four positions in college, Hardaway is a 6-7 point guard with a gift for distributing the ball and a big-time ability to score. The Bullets win seven-to-10 more games next year with him in the lineup. ★

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6-8 correct: Working too hard
3-5 correct: To the showers
0-2 correct: Try knitting
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a SPORT pin pictured here if you send us the correct answer to the SPORT Stumper given below. Send only your name, address and age to SPORT Quiz, 8490 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069. Limit one per person, and all entries must be postmarked by June 11, 1993.

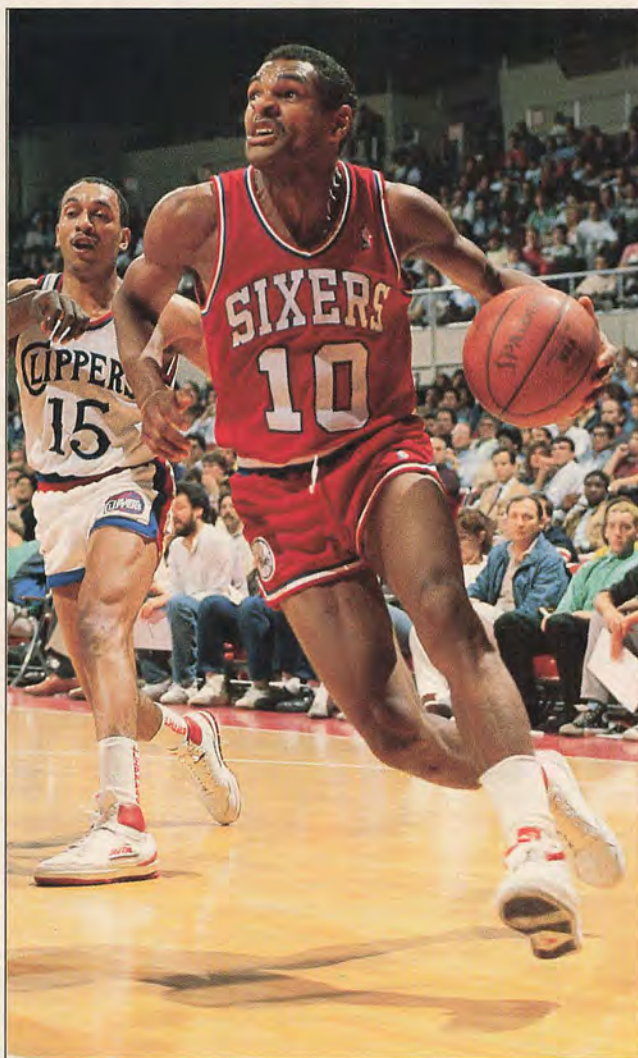
1 Maurice Cheeks (pictured) is among the top four players in steals in NBA Finals history. Name the others.

2 Name the only team to be swept in the NBA Finals after posting the best regular-season record.

3 Who was the last NBA player other than Michael Jordan to win a scoring title?
A. Bernard King
B. Alex English
C. Karl Malone
D. Dominique Wilkins

4 In 1992, whom did Felipe Alou replace to become manager of the Montreal Expos?
A. Buck Rodgers
B. Tom Runnells
C. Dick Williams
D. Jim Fanning

5 There were five 20-game winners during the 1992 major-league baseball season.



ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN/NBA PHOTOS

10 Which golfer won the U.S. Open in 1973?
A. Lee Trevino
B. Hale Irwin
C. Andy North
D. Johnny Miller

11 Name the only player to lead both the NBA and ABA in scoring.

12 Last season, which running back led Division I-A in rushing yards?
A. Trevor Cobb
B. Garrison Hearst
C. Ryan Benjamin
D. Marshall Faulk

13 Which tennis player won the most Wimbledon titles?
A. William Renshaw
B. Martina Navratilova
C. Helen Wills Moody
D. Jimmy Connors
—William Ladson

STUMPER

Name the only Chicago Cubs first baseman to win a Gold Glove.

Name them.

6 Who was the last major-leaguer to hit 20 home runs and steal 50 bases?
A. Rickey Henderson
B. Ron Gant
C. Barry Bonds
D. Brady Anderson

7 True or false: Joe Torre once led the National League in

hitting.

8 Last year, which horse won the Belmont Stakes?
A. A.P. Indy
B. Hansel
C. Go and Go
D. My Memoirs

9 Name the last golfer to win consecutive U.S. Open titles.



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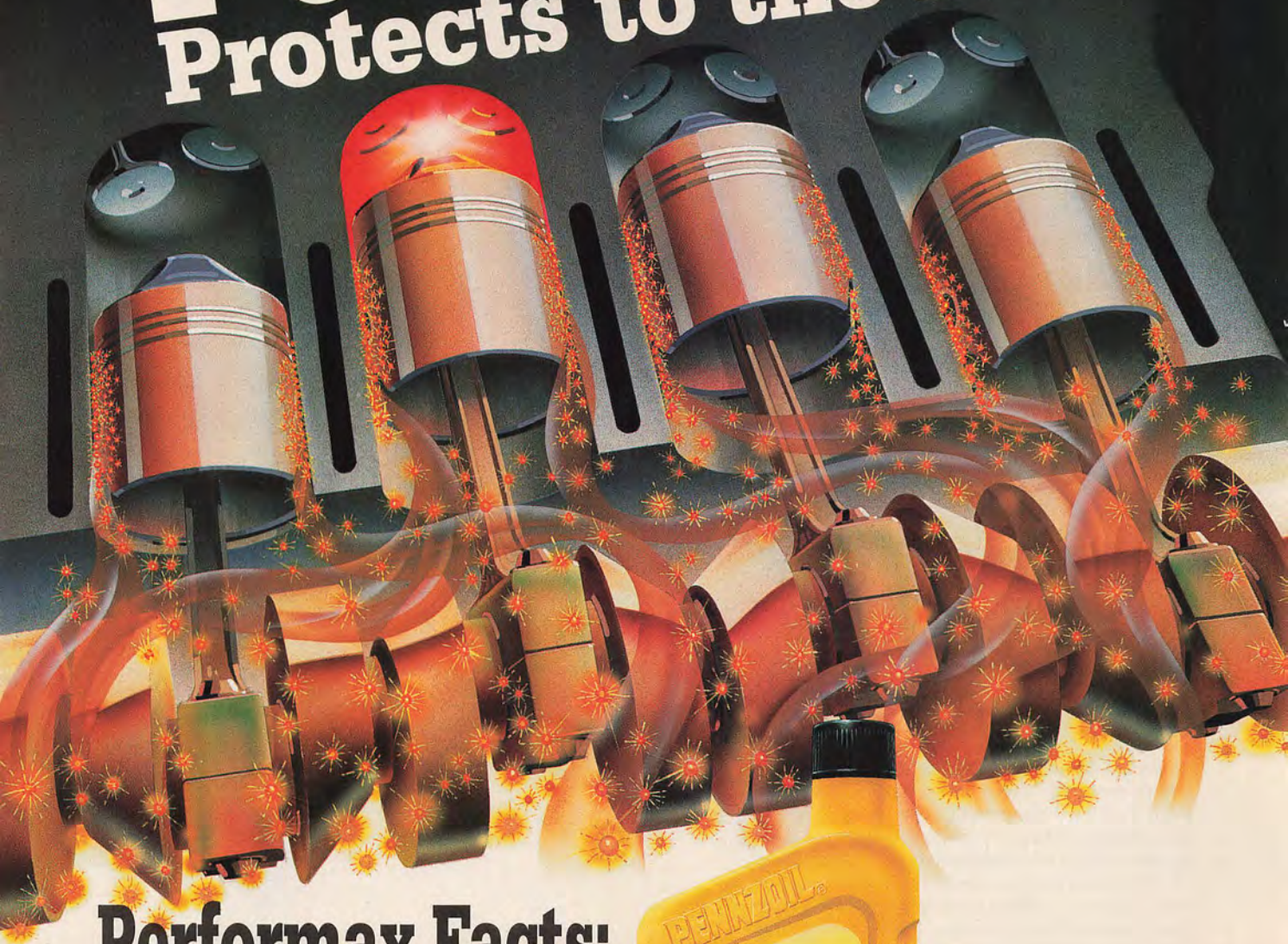
Ann Meyers ("Name the first and only woman to sign a free-agent contract with an NBA team.")

THIS MONTH'S QUIZ ANSWERS

1. John Havlicek, Steve Mix and Isiah Thomas 2. Washington Bullets (1975) 3. D. (1985-86) 4. B. Jack Morris, Greg Maddux, Tom Glavine, Kevin Brown and Jack McDowell 6. D (1992) 7. True (1971) 8. A 9. Curtis Strange 10. D 11. Rick Barry 12. D. (1,630) 13. B (nine)

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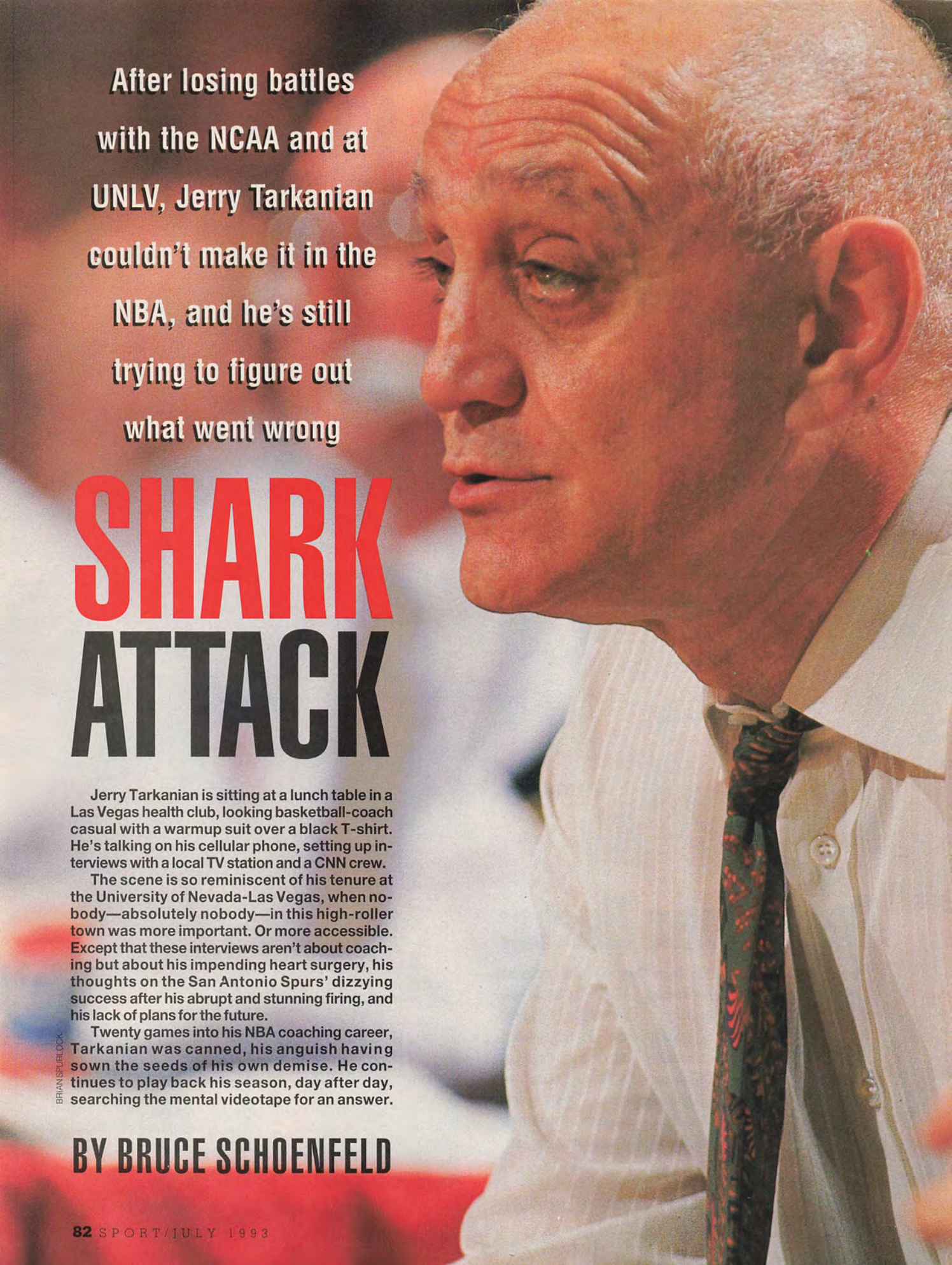
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After losing battles
with the NCAA and at
UNLV, Jerry Tarkanian
couldn't make it in the
NBA, and he's still
trying to figure out
what went wrong

SHARK ATTACK

Jerry Tarkanian is sitting at a lunch table in a Las Vegas health club, looking basketball-coach casual with a warmup suit over a black T-shirt. He's talking on his cellular phone, setting up interviews with a local TV station and a CNN crew.

The scene is so reminiscent of his tenure at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, when nobody—absolutely nobody—in this high-roller town was more important. Or more accessible. Except that these interviews aren't about coaching but about his impending heart surgery, his thoughts on the San Antonio Spurs' dizzying success after his abrupt and stunning firing, and his lack of plans for the future.

Twenty games into his NBA coaching career, Tarkanian was canned, his anguish having sown the seeds of his own demise. He continues to play back his season, day after day, searching the mental videotape for an answer.

BRIAN SPURLOCK

BY BRUCE SCHOENFELD

He agonizes over what he calls a misunderstanding with Spurs owner Red McCombs, who has since sold the club. Those who say Tark is happy in semiretirement in Vegas, avoiding travel, cashing his \$1.3 million annual paycheck, spending time with family, well, they don't hear the dejection in his voice.

"I had never lost three games in a week before," he says. "This was so different. After we'd lose I'd feel so miserable, my stomach would be in knots, and it used to blow my mind that the assistant coaches accepted it, and the players were talking on the airplane or listening to music. 'This is the NBA,' they'd tell me. 'You have to learn to deal with it.'"

Tark had been asking for a new point guard since before training camp, hounding McCombs and Spurs vice president Bob Bass and tactlessly stressing the point to the media. Rod Strickland, last year's starting point guard, had signed with the Portland Trail Blazers as a free agent. Despite McCombs' assurances of the contrary, Strickland wasn't replaced. Four losses in the first five games, hardly a definitive test, served to confirm Tarkanian's worries.

After 36 years of coaching, at age 62, he had come to the NBA to win a championship. There was no other reason to be there. And for the first time in his career, Tarkanian wondered whether his team had the tools to win. Not long into the season, he convinced himself that it didn't. That conviction, not the Spurs' 9-11 record, would eventually do him in, as well as usher in the John Lucas Era and a run at the NBA championship.

"If we hadn't been losing, I wouldn't have felt so strongly about getting a point guard," Tark says. "But we were losing, and I knew something had to be done.... I lie awake at night and I still can't believe this happened."

The NBA had seemed like a sensible idea to Tarkanian. Owner of the highest winning percentage of any major-college coach ever—625-122 over 24 seasons in Division I—Tarkanian had been forced out at UNLV after University president Dr. Robert C. Maxson, tired of the intensity with which the NCAA scrutinized the pro-

gram for recruiting violations, decided to transform the school's image. Even though he had never played or coached in an NBA game, Tarkanian had offers from several NBA teams. The Spurs' was the most enticing. With David Robinson, Terry Cummings, Sean Elliott and Strickland, Tark believed the Spurs were good enough to win a championship right away. Equally important, *they could run*.

At Vegas, Tarkanian's teams had rou-

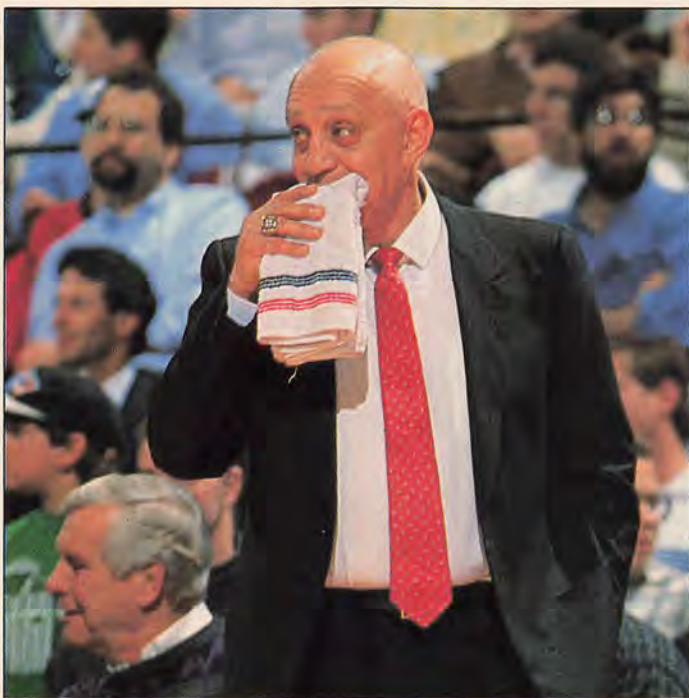
tween UNLV and the NBA: NBA teams lose. The Spurs started 0-2, and at 1-4, with twice as many losses as he had come to expect in a season, Tarkanian started to panic. "My blood pressure was up after two games," he says. "For the first time in my life, I needed sleeping pills. My friends from Vegas said they'd never seen me looking like that."

He had yet to understand the rhythm of life in the NBA, one that demands an unusual resiliency—late-night travel, losing sleep, and just plain losing. "You have to have a little leeway in your temperament in the NBA," says Elliott, the Spurs' All-Star forward. "You can't be so set against losing or you'll go crazy. Sometimes it was hard for him to comprehend that on a given night there are players in this league that just can't be stopped. This isn't like college basketball—you can't box-and-one someone like that. We'd come back to the huddle, and he'd say, 'Who's Ricky Pierce? How come you can't stop him?' We'd have to just tell him: 'Coach, this is the NBA. Sometimes you run into players who are having a big night, and there's absolutely nothing you can do about it.'"

No college coach with-out NBA experience has been able to succeed in the NBA in the modern era. Nobody had even tried it since Dick Vitale, now the Crazy Eddie of televised basketball, who talked his way into the Pistons job off the University of Detroit campus in 1978 and went 34-60 in a season-plus.

Much of coaching in college basketball is game preparation. The idea is to have a system and implement it. If you can get your players to execute the system flawlessly, you'll win. Especially if, as with Tarkanian, you had the best players. The NBA, on the other hand, is about matchups: arranging the players on the floor to maximize your strengths. Adjustments have to be made as the game unfolds. But Tarkanian wasn't as familiar with NBA personnel as he should have been. And when the losing started, he wanted to make changes.

He'd ask Bass to find him a point guard or a power forward, and Bass would shrug his shoulders; he had the salary cap to think about. He also believed that Tarkanian, accustomed to coaching some of the



"He didn't think this team could run—and it can run. He said we needed a point guard—and we had one here. We were running a stagnant, half-court game. He used to tell me, 'I don't like to play this way,' and I'd say, 'Well, don't then. Change it.'" —Spurs vice president Bob Bass

tinely scored 100 points a game. The Rebels' style was likened to NBA teams, a not-always-flattering comparison that made Tarkanian grin. But his undisciplined offense, full of three-on-one breaks and tomahawk dunks, was actually tightly choreographed, the product of intense, three-hour practices. Tarkanian found it far more difficult to implement his offense in the NBA.

"In college, you usually have two or three days of practice time," he says. "In the NBA, you're playing every other day."

Tarkanian would run a practice, one hour stretching into two, until Robinson or Elliott would remind him that there was a game to be played in a matter of hours.

There was another big difference be-

LOU CAPOZZOLANBA PHOTOS

most athletic college players in the nation, had unreasonable expectations. He thought Tarkanian was using his personnel problems as a cop-out.

"He didn't think this team could run—and it can run," Bass says. "He said we needed a point guard—and we had one here. We were running a stagnant, half-court game. He used to tell me, 'I don't like to play this way,' and I'd say, 'Well, don't then. Change it.'"

"I wanted to play a pressure defense, but I didn't have the guards to do it," Tarkanian says. "Bass told me to have Vinny [Del Negro] go up full court and pressure. Now, how can Vinny pressure the guards in this league? Vinny's a wonderful person, and he did a tremendous job playing out of position, but he's just not a point guard. Can you imagine Vinny going up to play pressure defense? It's like throwing kerosene on a fire."

"I would tell [Bass] every day, 'Please, get me a point guard.' It's not like I was asking for a superstar. I was talking about Gary Grant, Bimbo Coles, Mookie Blaylock. But every time I wanted a deal, Bass stopped it. He always found a reason why he couldn't do it."

At the same time, Avery Johnson was languishing on the Spurs' bench. He had been signed as a free agent the first week of the season, a journeyman who had already worn the uniforms of four NBA teams in four seasons. Later, after Tarkanian was gone, Lucas made Johnson his starter, and the Spurs won 18 of 19 games. But under Tark, Johnson played just a few minutes at a time, when he was playing at all.

"I was 100 percent right: We needed a point guard," Tarkanian says. "The only place I was wrong was, we had the one we needed sitting on our bench. Avery Johnson is playing better than most of the guards in the NBA. I didn't see it, but neither did anyone else, including Bob Bass. I mean, the guy had been cut by four teams. Nobody thought he was the answer."

Eighteen games into the season, the Spurs were at .500 for the first time. Those outside the situation were hopeful, but Tarkanian wasn't fooled. McCombs had

warned him to stop criticizing the personnel publicly. Tarkanian responded by hinting this would be his only season as the Spurs' coach, despite his three-year contract. He wrote a letter to McCombs pleading for personnel changes. The team lost by six at home to the Lakers and by 12 at Houston. "We could tell something had to give," says Avery Johnson. On Dec. 18, McCombs asked Tarkanian to meet him in the Spurs' offices.

the money wins. During the one-on-one with Tark, McCombs excused himself to get a soft drink. He had earned a reputation for impetuous decisions, and this epiphany came somewhere between Tarkanian's office and the Coke machine. He walked into Bass' office, closed the door and said he was ready to make a coaching change. He told Bass to find Lucas. Then he went back and fired Tarkanian.

LOU CAPOZZOLANBA PHOTOS



"After we'd lose I'd feel so miserable, my stomach would be in knots, and it used to blow my mind that the assistant coaches accepted it.... 'This is the NBA,' they'd tell me. 'You have to learn to deal with it.'"—Tarkanian

"I had no intention of firing him," McCombs says. "But he started right in, talking about the personnel. Much has been made about how he had to have a point guard, but that wasn't really the issue. The issue was that Tark became more convinced every game that the 12 players we had couldn't win on a nightly basis against the .500 clubs in the league. He had his mind made up.... He was much more emotional about it than he had been. I became convinced that he was becoming even more entrenched in that position."

It was a stubborn side of Tarkanian's personality that had been seen before—and had served him well. But this wasn't the NCAA he was fighting, it was his employer, and in pro sports, the man with

Tark was stunned, frighteningly numb. "I had no idea," he says today. "I thought we had a good relationship. It wasn't like we were at war. It wasn't like we didn't like each other. It wasn't like we were 2-18. We had nine of 12 new players, a whole new coaching staff, me being new to the NBA. I thought we were doing a pretty damn good job. He told me we had a difference in expectations. Well, his expectations were to play with the best. He said we were a point guard away. Isn't one of the responsibilities of a coach to assess the talent and tell the owner the situation?"

Still reeling today over the firing, Tarkanian would surprise nobody if he retired from coaching. He's a proud man—too proud to coach a .500 team—and it shames him to realize his career may have ended the way it did. He rises from the lunch table, his restaurant tab already paid by one of his friends, for Las Vegas is that kind of town. "I feel bad that I didn't finish the season," he says. "I really believe had I not been very successful I wouldn't have

gone back, even though I had a three-year contract, but I had never left anything in the middle like that before."

With his heart problems—Tarkanian had an angioplasty in March—he has eaten a light lunch—no salt, no sauces. Tarkanian's wife, Lois, has been quoted as saying that losing the Spurs' job might have been the best thing that ever happened because it might have kept him from a heart attack—a blessing in disguise, she called it. Tarkanian is asked if he agrees. He grimaces. "Not at all," he says. "Losing a job that way is never a blessing."★

Bruce Schoenfeld is a Colorado-based freelance sportswriter.

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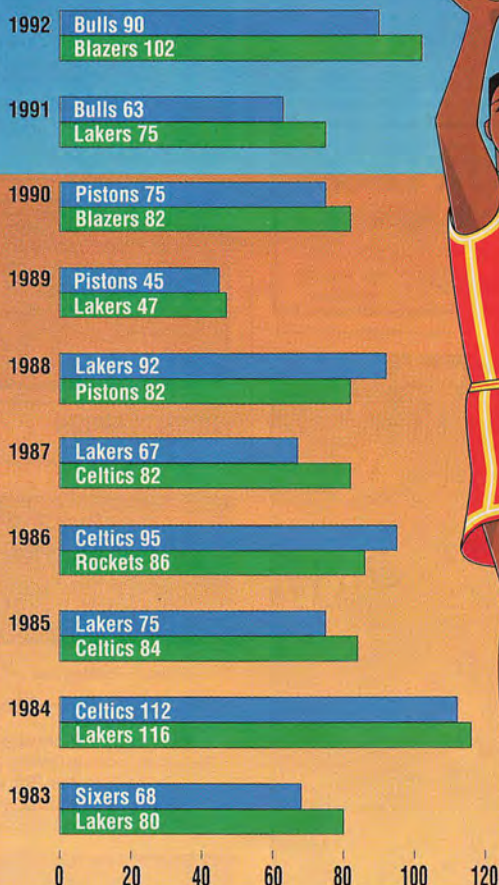
The list below shows the number of home runs hit and given up last season by each of the 26 major-league teams, followed by the differential (HR = home runs; HRA = home runs allowed).

TEAM	HR	HRA	DIFF.
BRVES	138	89	+49
RANGERS	159	113	46
BLUE JAYS	163	124	39
YANKEES	163	129	34
TIGERS	182	155	27
RANGERS	148	124	24
PADRES	135	111	24
MARINERS	149	129	20
A'S	142	129	13
EXPOS	102	92	10
PHILLIES	118	113	5
PIRATES	106	101	5
CUBS	104	107	-3
METS	93	98	5
DODGERS	72	82	10
REDS	99	109	10
WHITE SOX	110	123	13
TWINS	104	121	17
ASTROS	96	114	18
RED SOX	84	107	23
GIANTS	105	128	23
CARDINALS	94	118	24
ROYALS	75	106	31
INDIANS	127	159	32
ANGELS	88	130	42
BREWERS	82	127	45

COMPILED BY JEFF WEINSTOCK AND STEVEN WEINSTOCK. ILLUSTRATION BY TRACY CALVERT. JEFFREY M. JACOBSON

HANDLE WITH CARE

Turnovers are one of the most telling statistics in the NBA Finals. As the graphic below shows, in eight of the last 10 championship series, the winner (listed first) has been the team that committed the fewest turnovers.



RALLY KILLERS

The 10 major-leaguers who hit into double plays most often last season (minimum of 250 at-bats or 10 double plays):

PLAYER	AT-BATS/ DOUBLE PLAY
JEFF TACKETT (pictured)	16.3
TINO MARTINEZ	19.2
RENE GONZALES	19.4
KAL DANIELS	21.2
GEORGE BELL	21.6
TERRY STEINBACH	21.9
BRENT JACOBY	22.4
GREGG JEFFERIES	25.2
LUIS SALAZAR	25.5
GLENN BRAGGS	26.6



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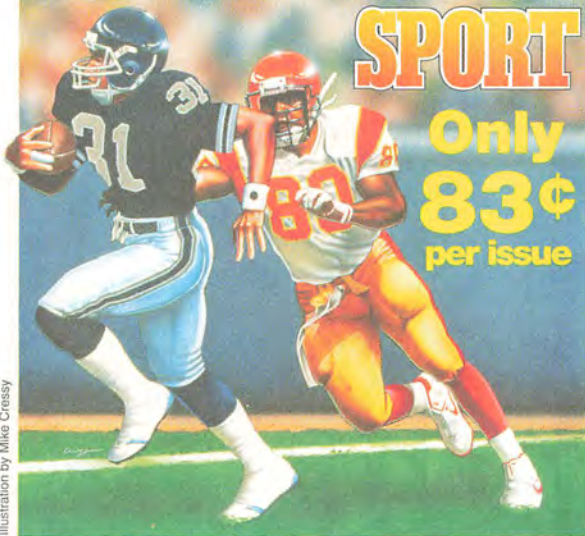


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